

NEWS SUMMARY

GENERAL
Vauxhall 17,000 on short time

Vauxhall has told 11,000 Luton and Ellesmere Port motor workers that they face short-time working for the rest of the year. And 6,000 workers at its Dunstable trucks plant face redundancies from September, in addition to short-time.

This means all four of Britain's major car-makers have large numbers of staff on short-time.

Vauxhall blames the recent steep fall-off in demand and says its position is very serious. Back Page

Hostages released
Welsh heiress Mrs. Teleri Jones and her Harrow schoolboy son Owain, 18, who were kidnapped by hoodlums from the family's Colombian ranch on January 4, have been released, in good health.

Observer appeal
The National Graphical Association, the print union, has appealed to Atlantic Richfield, the U.S. oil group which owns The Observer, to intervene in the machine managers' dispute, which threatens to close the newspaper. The N.G.A. says the management has refused to increase its offer and has declined a compromise.

Belfast air cut
British Midland Airlines is to cut its Gatwick-Belfast return fare to £66-£20 less than British Airways' shuttle price from October 1. Back Page

Pirates warned
Transport Department officials have cautioned coach hooking agents that they will not tolerate unauthorised London-Athens trips. Three Britons were killed in two crashes last week, in trips alleged to be in breach of safety rules.

Unsnunny Britain
The sun shines least on Britain and Ireland... birth rate is highest in Ireland and lowest in West Germany... road deaths per head are lowest in Britain, highest in Belgium, Luxembourg and France... the Dutch live longer and spend less time in hospital—EEC statistics from a newly published report.

Grouse race
The grouse shooting season opens today. Osoflow Arms, Clondrie, Surrey, landlord Alan Peck, has hired the Red Devils parachute team (dressed as chiefs) in a bid to be first to serve the birds.

Uranium stolen
Australia ordered tighter security after the discovery of the theft of two tonnes of £71,000-worth of uranium oxide from a Queensland mine.

Barred bars?
The U.S. and Canadian arms of Cadbury-Schweppes have been charged with smuggling chocolate labelled "reject candy bars" into the U.S. from Canada in a bid to heat import quotas.

Briefly...
Rotherham police have closed a mosque after violent clashes between two sects.

Two British Red Cross teams have left for drought-stricken Herer province, S.E. Ethiopia.

Cricket: Fifth English-West Indies Test (Headingley). No play, rain.

Countess of Arran became first woman to drive 100 mph in a speedboat, on Lake Windermere.

BUSINESS
Gold off \$16; mines fall 16.9

GOLD lost \$16 an oz in London to close at \$617.50. Page 17

STERLING closed unchanged against the dollar at \$2.3750, after an uneventful day in foreign exchange markets. Its trade weighted index was unchanged at 75.5. Page 17

DOLLAR fell against the D-mark to DM 1.7825 (DM 1.7840). Its index was unchanged at 84.5. Page 17

EQUITIES traded quietly and the FT 30-share index closed 2.1 off at 497.1, after being 2.4 down

at one stage. **GOLDS** came back following the bullion price fall, and the **Gold Mines Index** lost 16.9 to 362.3. Page 28

GILTS failed to attract support after last week's rally, the Government Securities index closing 0.28 down at 69.53. Page 23

WALL STREET was up 1.71 at 856.40 shortly before the close. Page 20

COMPANIES could be given the legal right to cancel the shares of investors who refuse to reveal their identities, a Department of Trade consultation document suggests. Back Page

INDUSTRIALISTS had belatedly begun to tell the Government that its policies were going badly wrong. Mr. Len Murray, TUC general secretary, said. Page 8

THE CBI has told Euro MPs that it will refuse to support an EEC directive on worker directors if it includes any reference to statutory enforcement of worker representatives on boards. Page 7

CHANCELLOR Helmut Schmidt is ready to intervene personally in the dispute between the West German Mannesmann steel concern and IG-Metall, the metalworkers' union, over a planned merger of divisions. Back Page

SHAREHOLDERS in the 47 Iranian banks nationalised last June will receive compensation amounting to IR 61bn, equivalent to about £367m. Back Page

MARCONI Avionics has been awarded a contract worth a possible £2m by the U.S. Air Force for aeronaual systems division. Page 8

Inflation pressures ease as material and fuel costs fall

BY PETER RIDDELL, ECONOMICS CORRESPONDENT

INFLATIONARY PRESSURES are now clearly easing in Britain. Cost of materials and fuel has fallen in the past three months while prices of manufactured products are increasing much more slowly than earlier this year.

This moderation primarily reflects the combination of the strong pound and the deepening world recession. These have made it more difficult for companies to raise prices. Consequently, the slowdown has to a large extent been at the cost of reduced profit margins for industry.

The wholesale price indices published yesterday by the Department of Industry confirm earlier indications that the inflationary upsurge of the past two years is dying away.

This is highlighted by the index of prices charged for manufactured products in the home market. This index rose by 4.5 per cent from January to April, but increased by only just over 3 per cent in the three months to July.

These figures are in line with the evidence of the Confederation of British Industry survey, which has shown a steadily falling proportion of manufacturing companies intending to raise their selling prices in face of falling demand.

These sectors such as textiles and clothing which have faced the toughest competition have made the smallest price increases in recent months.

This reflects both a decline in the world prices of some commodities and the reduction in sterling cost of imported materials caused by the rise in the value of the pound.

The detailed figures show that the costs index rose by 0.4 per cent last month to 201.9 (1975=100). For the fourth month running the 12-month rate of increase fell slightly, from 20.8 per cent in June to 20.1 per cent last month.

Cost of materials bought by manufacturing companies outside the food, drink and tobacco sectors rose by 0.5 per cent last month. Higher prices for gold, copper and titanium were partly offset by lower sterling prices for crude oil.

The index for output prices charged for manufactured products rose by 0.9 per cent last month to 203.1 (1975=100). The 12-month rate of increase slipped from 17.8 in June to 16.2 per cent last month. Prices charged by companies outside the food, drink and tobacco sectors rose by 0.9 per cent last month.

Prices of manufactured food products also rose by just under 1 per cent.

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Spot fall puts squeeze on N. Sea crude

BY RAY DAFTER, ENERGY EDITOR

NORTH SEA oil producers are coming under increasing pressure to lower contract prices in the light of falling spot prices.

One independent producer, which normally trades on the spot market, was last week forced to sell a tanker full of UK crude at more than \$3 a barrel below the official reference level of \$36.25.

British National Oil Corporation, the biggest trader of North Sea crude, has just persuaded some of its regular customers to buy a significant additional amount of oil—believed to be about 50,000 barrels a day—on contract terms because it was concerned it might have to sell at a discount on the spot market.

Oil refiners—some with North Sea interests themselves—very beginning to argue that BNOC should take the lead in tying-in contract rates. At a time when supplies are well in excess of demand the action could act as a further dampener on world oil prices, they say.

According to Petroleum Intelligence Weekly, the authoritative oil industry newsletter, refiners are trying North Sea price cuts to be backdated to July 1.

BNOC, which sells about 900,000 barrels a day of crude oil, said last night: "Nobody has yet requested us to reduce prices. However, we are continually looking at the question of prices."

The corporation, and other big North Sea producers such as British Petroleum, Shell and Exxon, have been encouraged by the Government to follow world pricing trends. This has resulted in UK tariffs being linked to those of the three main African exporters (Algeria, Libya and Nigeria) which produce oil of similar quality to North Sea crudes. The oil is among the highest

priced in the world: Nigeria is charging \$37.02 a barrel for its Bonny Light oil, Libya has set \$37 a barrel for its Zueitina crude, and Algeria has fixed a base rate of \$37 plus \$3 refundable exploration charge.

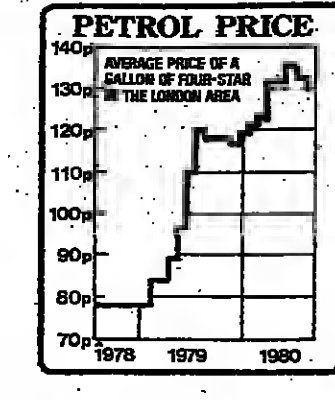
But the slack oil market, caused by over-supply and a severe drop in demand, has resulted in sharp falls in spot rates. In the case of high quality African and North Sea crudes, spot prices are now lower than contract rates.

Industry reports suggest that small North Sea cargoes have been offered up to \$4.20 a barrel below contract levels. Competitive African oils have been available at \$5 to \$6 below official levels. Earlier this year, when Nigerian Bonny Light oil was fetching about \$30 a barrel for contract deliveries, spot rates were soaring to between \$38 and \$41 a barrel.

One reason for the turn-round has been Saudi Arabia's decision to continue producing at its above-average rate of 9.5m barrels a day in spite of falling demand. The high output—in sharp contrast to production cuts by other members of the Organisation of Petroleum Exporting Countries—is being maintained by Saudi Arabia in a bid to restore greater pricing unity among the major exporters.

For the same reason, the Saudis have maintained their reference crude price at \$28 a barrel, \$4 a barrel below the ceiling level set for Gulf crudes at the last OPEC meeting in Algiers in June. However, there is increasing speculation in the industry that Saudi Arabia might add \$2 a barrel in the next month or two.

Term oilfield development, Record response to licence round, Back Page.



Esso cuts price of petrol

By Sue Cameron

ESSO is to step up the petrol price war today by making a 1.75p a gallon cut in its whole-sale prices—up to 2p off at the pumps if passed on in full to the motorist.

But the petrol price cuts will be on an unofficial basis and will last for eight weeks only. The group's published whole-sale prices will remain unchanged—but garages will be invoiced at the new lower charge from today. Esso, one of the two leaders in the UK petrol market, will review its pricing policy in October.

Shell, which runs neck-and-neck with Esso on British petrol sales, is expected to cut its prices within the next few days. BP Oil, which ranks third in the marketplace, is also thought likely to give customers the opportunity to further reduce pump prices.

Both Esso and Shell formally cut their whole-sale petrol prices by 1.75p a gallon at the start of last month. The two companies, which together account for about 40 per cent of the UK petrol market, admitted that the cuts had been forced on them by stiff competition at the pumps.

Over the past six weeks the average pump price of four star has fallen from 134p-135p a gallon to only 131p-132p and it is not uncommon for garages to charge at 110p as 129p. Esso yesterday admitted that the petrol price battle had spread throughout the country. It was no longer restricted to areas such as the North East where pricing is traditionally keener than in most other regions.

This was why Esso opted for an across-the-board cut in its whole-sale price instead of offering price support to small

Continued on Back Page

Government borrowing higher than expected

BY PETER RIDDELL, ECONOMICS CORRESPONDENT

BORROWING BY central government was higher than expected in the first four months of the current financial year, mainly because of the financial squeeze on nationalised industries and the sharp rise in defence spending.

Treasury figures published yesterday show that central government borrowed £5.41bn between April and July. This compares with a figure of £3.82bn for the same period last year and a total of £9.3bn for the whole of 1980-81 projected by the March Budget.

The Government still appears confident that there will not be an overshoot in 1980-81. In a recent Parliamentary written answer Sir Geoffrey Howe, the Chancellor, said he had no reason to suppose that central government borrowing was not on course for the financial year as a whole.

City analysts and some official advisers are not as optimistic and there have been rough-and-ready estimates of a possible overshoot of at least £500m to £1bn.

The Treasury statement yesterday said central Government borrowing was usually high in the early months of the financial year. The trend is more pronounced this year primarily because of the revised timing of payments of petroleum revenue tax—now due in September and March.

This official explanation accounts for only part of the large rise in borrowing this year and other factors are more worrying.

Between April and July consolidated fund expenditure, the largest component of central government spending, was 26½ per cent higher than a year ago, compared with a Budget forecast of a 20 per cent rise for the whole of 1980-81.

A large part of this overshoot can be explained by the surge in defence spending and officials hope that the squeeze on the Department's budget will restrain spending.

The other main overshoot has been in borrowing by nationalised industries from central government—£656m in four months compared with a projected total of £900m for the whole of 1980-81. Some of this may be explained by borrowing ahead of recently announced price rises.

Local authority borrowing was also very high in July, at £217m, and there may be problems on this account because of over-spending by many councils.

Analysts are also concerned that the recession may push up borrowing by depressing revenue and by pushing up spending on social security benefits. But in the first four months of the year tax revenue was buoyant, with consolidated fund revenue up 21 per cent compared with a Budget forecast rise of 20 per cent for the whole year. This partly reflects the impact of income tax receipts produced by the rapid growth of average earnings.

In July, central government borrowing was £824m compared with £27m in July last year.

in the under-sea rock structure and to allow the fluid to flow down the water injection well to a geological zone level with the Claymore Field.

But it is not turning its back on the oil. Occidental and its partners have decided to order a £250,000 eight-well drilling frame from Blackwell Engineering.

The discovery, which could contain recoverable reserves of about 50m barrels, is thought to be part of the Claymore complex.

Interests in the discovery, which have still to decide on a development scheme, are Occidental, Getty, Allied Chemical and Thomson.

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Oil found in search for water

A NORTH SEA drilling team has accidentally found oil—while looking for water—our Energy Editor writes.

A group, led by Occidental Petroleum, was drilling a water injection well some 2½ miles north of its Claymore Field when it struck oil. Undetected, Occidental has continued its quest for water. The company is now drilling a hole at an angle to the oil discovery well which, it hopes, will eventually be used to carry water needed to help drive oil and gas out of the Claymore Field.

In a unique North Sea operation, Occidental hopes to tap a source of water high up

in the under-sea rock structure and to allow the fluid to flow down the water injection well to a geological zone level with the Claymore Field.

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CHIEF PRICE CHANGES YESTERDAY

(Prices in pence unless otherwise indicated)

RISES	
Boats	222 + 5
British Sugar	260 + 8
Carroll	30 + 4
Derrington	301 + 3
Fibrel Int.	284 + 4
Forward Technology	118 + 9
Highland Distilleries	119 + 5
Home Charm	102 + 6
House of Fraser	146 + 8
Johnson Matthey	206 + 5
Lex Service	58 + 6
Marchwiel	100 + 6
Medminster	331 + 4
Muirhead	140 + 8
Pesler-Hattersley	123 + 6
Plessey	226 + 5
Ryl. Bk. of Scotland	86 + 5
Smith Whitworth	9 + 3
Thorn EMI	338 + 10
Vesper	140 + 7
Yarrow	240 + 10
FALLS	
Burmah Oil	199 + 6
LASMO	720 + 26
Shell Transport	418 + 8
Tricentrol	344 + 10
Ultramar	354 + 8
Ashton Mining	142 + 12
Berjunial Tin	245 + 30
Cons. G.F. Australia	450 + 30
CIA	284 + 16
Metals Exch.	75 + 5
Treas. 11pc 1991 A	1220 pd.1. £171 - 1
Treas. 13pc 2090	1775 pd.1. £751 - 1
General Accident	298 + 4
London Brick	72 + 4
Nottingham Manf.	89 - 7
Tube Inv.	246 - 4
Rydgov	648 - 57
Klont Col.	213 - 1
Western Deep	220 - 11

Film saves silver, Ilford claims

BY DAVID FISHLOCK, SCIENCE EDITOR

A BRITISH research laboratory claims to have invented the world's first commercial black-and-white photographic film that needs no silver to create the image on its negative.

Though the film itself uses silver, the metal is dissolved completely in the processing, and can be reclaimed from the chemical solutions.

The new film, called Ilford XP1 400, was invented at the Brentwood, Essex, research laboratories of the Ciba-Geigy subsidiary.

Ilford plans to launch it next month at Photokina, the annual photographic exhibition in Cologne, and to market it first in West Germany.

Dr. Alan Wilson, product manager for Ilford's black-and-white film, said yesterday that the film should be available in Britain early next year.

He described the new film as a premium one, capable of "superb image quality," and aimed primarily at the professional photographer and "keen amateur."

It is a fast film offering very fine grain at 400 ASA, and expected to sell for about 20 per cent more than standard black-and-white film.

The company attributes the invention to Dr. Jim Doyle, an emulsion chemist at its research laboratories. In the short term its advantage lies in the quality, and hence sharpness and contrast, of the image, the company said.

The film is aimed at the premium end of the market, accounting for only a few per cent of sales.

In the longer term, the fact that no silver remains locked up in the chemistry of the negative could reduce the industry's demand for fresh silver. At present about 30 per cent of the silver used to make black-and-white film remains in the negative.

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هكذا من الجاهل

EUROPEAN NEWS

Italy's coalition looks increasingly fragile since the Bologna bombing, writes Rupert Cornwell in Rome

Cossiga takes his troubles away for the summer

THE four-month-old Italian coalition of Christian Democrats, Socialists and Republicans faces a series of severe problems, any one of which, or combination of which, could confirm the widespread expectation of another government crisis this autumn.

Politicians yesterday broke up for a shorter summer recess than usual, having failed for once to settle outstanding problems in a rush of early August activity, and thus clear the decks for a comparatively fresh start in September.

This time several delicate issues are hanging fire, in the general climate of malaise and bitterness left by the terrorist bombing at Bologna on August 2, as a result of which 79 people have now lost their lives.

Nothing did more to damage the confidence of the coalition partners than the heckling and jeering of the 300,000 crowd gathered at last week's funeral.

It was directed at all the ruling politicians, most notably at Sig. Francesco Cossiga, the Prime Minister, and Sig. Bettino Craxi, the Socialist leader.

Although the scene of the incidents was the Communist stronghold of Bologna, there was no mistaking the intensity of public frustration at the failure of this Administration, and its Christian-Democrat-led predecessors, to bring random terrorism under control.

Fragile base

The jitteriness was most immediately visible among the Socialists, always the most sensitive single component of the fragile base on which any Italian Government is founded. Socialist Cabinet ministers last weekend issued a statement lamenting the Government's lack of executive authority, and underlining the party's refusal to put up indefinitely with the sniping from the Christian

Democrat wing which would prefer closer ties with the Communists rather than the Socialists.

The statement, moreover, explicitly referred to another ingredient of the current malaise, the visible strain and weariness of Sig. Cossiga himself, subject in the past two months to enormous personal pressures.

First the Prime Minister had to fight an exhausting battle over the Government's economic package in early July. Then came the parliamentary impeachment proceedings over whether he had violated state secrets in the Donat Cattin terrorist case, and finally the harrowing episode of Bologna.

It may be that both Sig. Cossiga's resilience, and a measure of political calm and understanding, will be restored by the short holiday lull. But any respite is likely to be short-lived.

Soon after ferragosto, the mid-August shut-down, Parliament's lower house will reassemble to examine the Government's economic proposals, with the possibility of further strenuous opposition from the Communist Party.

Relations between Socialists and Christian Democrats, for their part, will again be tested by two specific issues: the formation of governments in some of the regions, which have still not been decided more than two months after last June's local elections and the controversial joint venture between the state-controlled car concern Alfa Romeo, and Nissan of Japan.

The Alfa-Nissan decision, now postponed until mid-September, has produced an almost vertical split in the Government, between the Socialists, who are in favour of the deal, and most of the Christian Democrats and Republicans, who are against it.

Underlying the row is the widespread fear of a very uncomfortable autumn on the bites deeper. In the eye of any storm will be the troubled motor industry, where Fiat, the country's biggest private group and an opponent of the Alfa-Nissan scheme, is threatening heavy redundancies this autumn if the slump in the car market continues.

New measures

In a wider sense, the economy could further aggravate relations between Christian Democrats and Socialists, should any fresh restrictive measures prove necessary this autumn. The latest jump in inflation, back up to an annual rate of almost 22 per cent in July, is not an encouraging pointer.

Against this background, the Bologna bombing, which in one way or another can work only to the Communists' advantage,

could not have come at a worse moment.

The Communists, by opposing the Government across the board, have demonstrated that the Italian system, so complicated and full of checks and balances, is to all intents unworkable without a modicum of accommodation with them.

The Communists have made clear that their hard line is aimed at getting rid of the present Government (the first for six years in Italy to have a built-in parliamentary majority without Communist participation), and at replacing it with one more to their liking.

For a while this line seemed counter-productive, and merely strengthened the cohesion of the three coalition parties. But Bologna has changed this impression, and the trials of the autumn will be the main test both for Sig. Cossiga and for the survival of his Government.



Sig. Cossiga: visible strain and weariness

North Sea oil strike negotiation fails

By Fay Gjester in Oslo

THE LIKELIHOOD that Norway's Government will intervene to halt the month-old strike on Norwegian mobile oil rigs appeared to be increasing yesterday. A weekend meeting between representatives of the rig owners and the seamen's union ended in deadlock, and a further session today of all the parties involved, including representatives of the officers and engineers' unions—proved equally fruitless.

The Government arbitrator, who called yesterday's meeting, said the two sides were still too far apart for voluntary arbitration to have any chance of success.

The Government can stop the strike by referring the dispute to compulsory arbitration, but has hesitated so far in the face of strong union opposition. Last week, however, it asked the strike-hit oil companies to report by yesterday on how the strike was affecting them.

Mr. Reulf Steen, the Shipping Minister, has declared already that the unions and employers should have reached agreement by now. He added that the Government could not be influenced by the threats of some workers that they might ignore an order to return to work.

The strike, affecting 22 rigs in Norwegian and British waters of the North Sea, plus two in more distant areas, has virtually halted exploration drilling on Norway's continental shelf. Also because construction and hotel platforms are affected, the dispute has seriously hampered offshore construction and maintenance work on both sides of the North Sea.

The companies drilling on three north Norwegian blocks only recently opened for exploration have warned that they may not be able to complete even one well apiece before the summer operating season ends.

Originally it was planned to drill a total of five wells on the three blocks between May 15 and October 1. The start of work was delayed by extra rig inspection ordered after the Alexander Kielland hotel platform capsized earlier this year.

FINANCIAL TIMES, published daily except Sundays and holidays. US subscription rates \$28.00 per annum. Second Class postage paid at New York, N.Y., and at additional mailing centres.

Cyprus talks resume

By Our Nicosia Correspondent

INTERCOMMUNAL talks resumed in Cyprus at the weekend after a break of more than a year. The Greek Cypriots made a procedural concession by agreeing to the use of the word "bizonal" in the opening statement from Dr. Kurt Waldheim, the United Nations Secretary-General.

Dr. Waldheim said his "understanding" was that both sides supported "a federal solution of the constitutional aspect and a bizonal solution of the territorial aspect of the Cyprus problem."

Shortly afterwards, however, President Spyros Kyprianou, the Greek Cypriot leader, warned that if the Turks tried to use the term "bizonal" to promote a partition there would be "no room for progress or negotiation." Greek Cypriots insisted on a "biregional" federation, with the central government having powers to ensure the unity of the country.

Mr. Rauf Denktaş, the Turkish Cypriot leader, said Greek Cypriots should forget about the refugee problem. The whole question of people displaced in the 1974 war had been "settled".

Mr. Kyprianou refuted this.

HOSPITAL PROJECT KICKBACKS CLAIMED TO RUN INTO MILLIONS

Corruption row shakes Austria's leaders

BY PAUL LENDVAI IN VIENNA

AUSTRIA'S BUSINESS and political communities are in the midst of an upheaval caused by allegations of what may prove to be the country's biggest corruption scandal since the war.

Nine businessmen and officials have been detained pending investigation of allegations that kickbacks running into millions of Austrian schillings were paid in connection with the construction of a huge hospital in Vienna.

Chief contenders

On the political side, the affair indirectly involves the two chief contenders for the succession to Dr. Bruno Kreisky, the 69-year-old Chancellor and head of the Socialist Party. They are Herr Leopold Gratz, Mayor of Vienna, and Dr. Hannes Androsch, Minister of Finance, who are ultimately responsible for the company set up jointly by the municipality and the Government to run the Vienna hospital project.

The 2,100-bed hospital complex, which will be one of the largest in Europe, has been under construction for several years. It is expected to be com-



Chancellor Bruno Kreisky (left) has repeatedly clashed with his deputy Dr. Hannes Androsch (right).

pleted by 1986. Costs have shot up to ASch 37bn (about £1.3bn) and may eventually reach ASch 50bn, including interest charges.

Those detained include the executive director of the hospital company; a director of the local affiliate of ITT; and

four directors of Siemens Austria.

A series of allegations published in the Austrian press and by the prosecutor in charge of the case say that millions of schillings in kickbacks have been transferred to accounts in several countries, including

Liechtenstein. Austrian investigators have been to Liechtenstein in search of evidence.

The opposition People's Party, beaten by Dr. Kreisky's Socialists in three successive elections, has demanded an emergency meeting of Parliament, interrupting the summer recess, and is widely expected to call for a vote of no confidence in Dr. Androsch, who is Vice-Chancellor besides being in charge of the country's finances.

Repeated clashes

Dr. Androsch has repeatedly clashed with Dr. Kreisky, most recently when he opposed the Chancellor's proposal to defeat tax dodgers by imposing a withholding tax on the interest paid on savings books.

Early this year Dr. Kreisky insisted that Dr. Androsch must give up his personal control over Consultatio, one of the biggest chartered accountancy firms in Austria. The Finance Minister put his 51 per cent shareholding into trusteeship. His wife owns 24 per cent of the shares.

The firm is mentioned in some handwritten notes from the executive director of the hospital company which have been seized by the police. The

somewhat cryptic words are: "Consultation also indirectly."

Dr. Androsch has firmly denied any connection between his firm and the hospital affair. But he has admitted publicly that he recommended a man whom the Vienna city authorities placed in charge of all hospitals. That man has now been detained.

Matters have been further stirred by Herr Gerhard Bauer, an executive director of Consultatio until a few weeks ago, who has admitted to the authorities that he forgot to declare assets of ASch 2m in his personal tax return. Herr Bauer is currently negotiating the sale of his shares in Consultatio to Dr. Androsch.

A parliamentary commission has for some weeks been investigating the allegations surrounding the Vienna hospital, which clearly are political dynamite. Opinion polls, the results of which have not been officially published, are said to show an unprecedented degree of popular dissatisfaction with the Socialist Party. The People's Party may have found an issue to break the Socialist majority. But the elections are still four years off; much can happen in the meantime.

Danish defence challenge

By Hilary Barnes in Copenhagen

THE Danish Government's claim that it never agreed to the NATO target to increase defence spending by 3 per cent a year has been challenged by Mr. K. B. Andersen, the former Foreign Minister, who took part in the NATO Council meeting in Washington in 1978 at which the target was decided.

The Government is planning to freeze defence spending at constant prices, although defence chiefs have warned that this will rapidly reduce the armed forces' fighting strength by about one-third.

Mr. Andersen recalled that although Denmark technically had reserved its position, Mr. Anker Joergensen, the Prime Minister, told Parliament after the Washington meeting that the NATO target would "play an important role in deciding on the future defence effort."

Mr. Henning Christoffersen, the Liberal leader and former Foreign Minister, recently warned the Government that, if it persists in freezing defence spending, it may be defeated this winter.

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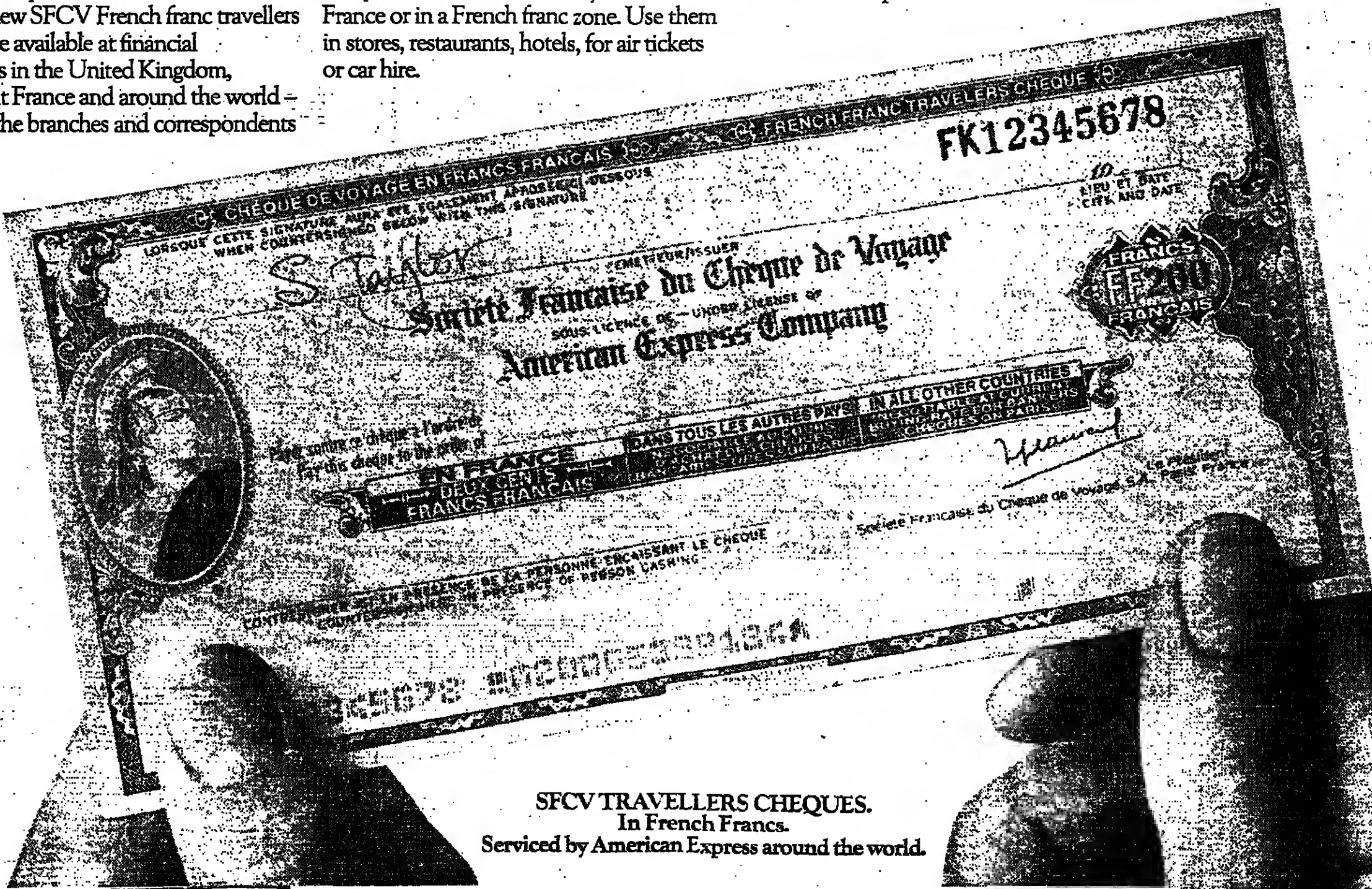
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WAGE RATES RISING FASTER THAN COMPETITORS'

W. German costs top big league

BY KEVIN DONE IN FRANKFURT

WEST GERMANY has the highest labour costs among the larger industrialised countries, according to a study by the Institute of the German Economy. Three of its smaller trading partners, however, have even higher labour costs, largely because of the more inflated level of social contributions required of employers.

Among its major trading rivals, West Germany widened its labour costs gap with the U.S. and Canada last year, while its relative position against France, the UK, Italy and Japan showed no significant deterioration.

Belgium has the unenviable position of being the most expensive of all the industrialised countries in which to employ labour, followed closely by Sweden and the Netherlands.

Hourly labour costs in Belgium—the hourly wage plus social costs—reached a peak last year of DM 21.53 (£5.14), compared with DM 21.14 (£5.05) in West Germany, DM 16.95 (£4.05) in the U.S., DM 11.77 (£2.81) in Japan and only DM 10.20 (£2.43) per hour in the UK.

Despite the relative weakness of the Deutsche Mark in the European Monetary System in recent months, the steady

	Total labour costs per hour	Average hourly wage	Additional social costs per hour
Belgium	21.53	12.41	9.12
Sweden	21.36	12.95	8.41
Netherlands	21.14	12.07	9.11
West Germany	21.14	12.46	8.68
Switzerland	20.62	14.22	6.40
Denmark	20.29	16.80	3.49
U.S.	16.95	12.24	4.71
Italy	15.25	7.33	7.92
Canada	15.05	11.71	3.34
France	15.05	8.41	6.64
Austria	14.14	7.56	6.58
Japan	11.77	9.69	2.08
UK	10.20	7.85	2.35
Spain	10.16	4.39	3.77
Ireland	8.98	4.96	2.02
Greece	6.25	4.11	2.14

Figures based on average 1979 exchange rate.

Source: Institute of the German Economy

appreciation of the West German currency over the past decade has ensured that the Federal Republic's wage costs by international comparison have risen faster than those of most other major industrial countries.

Reckoned in local currencies, for example, Italian wage rates have risen by 423 per cent from 1970-1979, UK wage rates by

268 per cent and French rates by 230 per cent. The higher levels of inflation in these countries, and the resulting currency devaluations, however, mean that the equivalent increases in Deutsche Marks have been only 99 per cent, 64 per cent and 115 per cent, compared with a Deutsche Mark increase in West German wage rates of 101 per cent.

Apart from the substantial appreciation of the Deutsche Mark—in the past decade it has gained 164 per cent against the lira, 125 per cent against sterling and 100 per cent against the U.S. dollar—the other major factor pushing up West German wage rates has been the rise in employers' social contributions. Last year these social costs were equivalent to an extra 69.7 per cent on the hourly wage rate against less than 30 per cent in several other countries, including the UK and Japan.

One of the most significant turn-arounds in West German labour cost comparisons has occurred with the U.S. Whereas in 1970, U.S. labour costs were about 68 per cent higher than the West German level, last year, West German employers found themselves paying 25 per cent more per hour than their U.S. rivals.

The most dramatic change has occurred, however, between the U.S. and Japan. Whereas in 1970, U.S. labour costs were four times higher than Japanese levels, last year, U.S. costs—reckoned in D-marks—were less than one and a-half times higher last year.

Sweden may raise VAT to over 22%

By William Duffell in Stockholm

SWEDEN'S non-Socialist coalition intends to raise value added tax from September in an effort to curb domestic demand. The exact amount of the increase will be decided after talks on Friday, to which the Government has invited the Social-Democrat opposition.

A 2 to 3 per cent rise has been anticipated in public discussion. A 3 per cent increase would take Sweden's VAT to over 22 per cent.

The VAT increase was originally planned to form part of a belt-tightening economic programme to be launched in the autumn but the three coalition party leaders decided yesterday that the deterioration in the economic outlook called for swifter action.

Mr. Thorbjörn Fälldin, the Prime Minister, said that while the OECD was forecasting a 1-2 per cent drop in total demand in its area during the second half of this year, Sweden faced the prospect of an increase of 4.5 per cent.

The country could not continue to consume at a rate which was out of line with its production and export capacities, Mr. Fälldin said. He also mentioned a currency outflow of SKr 2.5bn-Skr 2.8bn (£253m-£300m) from Sweden during the three months to the end of July.

Sweden's external position is causing much concern. In the first six months, the trade deficit reached a record SKr 6bn, boosted by the halt to exports during the May general strike and the subsequent dockers' strike.

Recent estimates suggest a payments deficit of close to SKr 20bn for the year as a whole.

The non-Socialists, who have only a one-seat majority in parliament, also want to discuss with the opposition plans to reduce public spending by SKr 7bn in the next budget year.

Mr. Olof Palme, the Social-Democrat leader, said yesterday his party was ready to talk about economic policy but only if the Government took no binding decisions beforehand.

Nationalist disavows terrorism as bomb wave rocks Corsica

BY DAVID WHITE IN PARIS

AMID A fresh series of bomb attacks in Corsica and a French police round-up of suspected terrorists, Dr. Edmond Simeoni, the best-known of the island's nationalist leaders, has disclaimed any association with the armed clandestine movement and reaffirmed his aim of achieving limited autonomy by legal means.

Dr. Simeoni, one of three brothers who have long been regarded as figureheads of the Corsican separatist movement, told a meeting of the Corsican People's Union (UPC) in Corte, the island's spiritual capital, that co-operation with the Corsican National Liberation Front (FNLC) had to be ruled out.

"While internal autonomy can count on a large consensus among the population," he said, "independence, by contrast, is rejected by the great majority of the Corsican people because it implies an armed national liberation struggle and a victory which is unthinkable."

Both groups are offshoots of the defunct Corsica Regional Action organisation founded by the Simeonis in the late 1960s. The UPC functions as a normal political party, the FNLC as an underground guerrilla group.

Dr. Simeoni's remarks were in response to a charge by M.

Michel Debré, a leading Gaullist and defender of French unity, who accused the UPC of being a propaganda front for terrorists.

Since the arrest last week of M. Jeannick Leonelli, accused of taking part in a machine gun attack on French police guards outside the Italian Embassy in Paris in May, three other alleged FNLC members have had their cases referred to the state security court.

A further three suspects were due to be sent to the French capital today.

On Saturday night a police station on the island was peppered with bullets from an automatic weapon and a house was damaged by a bomb. The attacks followed a series of explosions at electricity installations.

Tension in Corsica reached a peak last January when a policeman and two civilians were killed in shooting incidents and separatists held hostages in a hotel in the capital, Ajaccio.

M. Christian Bonnet, the Interior Minister, later accused the Corsican separatist movement of being manipulated from abroad. This charge was vehemently rejected by Dr. Simeoni, who has also campaigned for the release of suspected terrorists.

Belgian Budget adds up to austerity package

BY GILES MERRITT IN BRUSSELS

THE BELGIAN Government has drawn up a 1981 Budget aimed at substantially reducing the public sector borrowing requirement and the net deficit on State spending.

But the Budget being proposed by Mr. Wilfried Martens's coalition Government also adds up to a stern austerity package that will considerably raise the prices of petrol, diesel fuel and liquid propane gas by increasing the VAT rate on fuels from the present 16 per cent to 25 per cent.

The public sector borrowing requirement for next year is to be BFr 242bn (£3.6bn), which as a proportion of gross national product will reduce the rate from 7.3 per cent of

GNP in 1980 to 6.4 per cent next year.

Mr. Martens's overall target in restoring balance to the Belgian State's finances has since last year been to reduce government borrowing to about 5 per cent of GNP by 1982.

The Belgian Government's net deficit is due to be BFr 90.7bn next year, as against BFr 100.7bn for 1980. Total receipts are being calculated for 1981 at BFr 1,104.2bn, and government spending is being set at BFr 1,194.9bn.

One victim of the tight discipline being imposed on Belgium's Government, departmental projects, is the defence budget, due to rise by only 8.3 per cent.

Wider row threatens over Air Portugal

By Jimmy Burns in Lisbon

THE CRITICAL financial state of Air Portugal, the Portuguese national airline, is threatening to provoke a serious row within the country's troubled public sector and stir up further the rivalries between Ministries.

Industry officials say the airline have requested Government permission to defer an estimated Es 950m (£8.3m) payment owed to Petrolgal, the national oil company, in advance of the next three months' supply of jet fuel.

The request apparently has been turned down by Sr Alvaro Barreto, the Minister for Industry, on the grounds that it might set a precedent for other debt-ridden public companies. The centre-right Government is officially committed to withdrawing from the interventionist policies followed by its Socialist predecessors.

Sr Barreto is involved because Petrolgal is his Ministry's responsibility. He was also chairman of the company until recently. However, Air Portugal is nominally the responsibility of Sr Viana da Bapista, the Minister of Transport, who is yet to take any action on the airline's request. A final decision can only be taken at Cabinet level when Ministers have returned from holiday later this month.

In the absence of any formal Government involvement, Air Portugal and Petrolgal are locked in heated negotiations. Even before the latest request, industry officials estimated the airline owed Petrolgal about £43m, equivalent to about 18 months' fuel supply. Much of this debt should have been liquidated earlier this year as a result of a financial recovery scheme agreed by the management and the Government, but this is being reconsidered because of the crippling three weeks pilots' strike which ended on July 14.

Air Portugal's troubles have already contributed to a considerable souring of relations within the bitertic, cohesive ruling Democratic Alliance. With less than three months before the general election, Sr Francisco Sa Carneiro, the Prime Minister, has no wish for a Cabinet split. However, it is realised that any further hesitation over the airline risks the company becoming bankrupt.

Call for nuclear bomb demonstration

GENEVA — Dr. Sigvard Eklund, director-general of the International Atomic Energy Agency, yesterday proposed a demonstration nuclear explosion to create a massive world reaction against nuclear weapons.

His proposal came at the opening session of the United Nations conference to review progress in implementing the 1968 nuclear non-proliferation treaty.

He said there were now 50,000 nuclear weapons whose combined explosive power equaled more than a million of the bombs dropped on the Japanese city of Hiroshima.

"How I wish that in a way consistent with the limited test-ban treaty the nuclear weapon powers would now arrange a demonstration explosion of a weapon... to give... an idea of the destructive power."

Dutch industrial output down from earlier peak

BY CHARLES BATCHELOR IN AMSTERDAM

DUTCH INDUSTRIAL production fell in June from an unusually high level the preceding month. However, activity increased in the first six months of the year compared with the same period of 1979, although the picture is distorted by the effect of bad weather conditions early last year.

Activity in the manufacturing, minerals and gas industries fell by 3 per cent between May and June, according to provisional and seasonally adjusted figures from the Central Statistics Office. Manufacturing output alone was down 4 per cent.

In the first six months activity rose by 2 per cent throughout industry and by 4 per cent in manufacturing. The food and tobacco, textile, wood and furniture, paper, printing and metal industries performed better than industry as a whole.

In the April-to-June period, below average activity was reported by the clothing, leather, oil, chemicals and building sectors.

Meanwhile, inflation continued to accelerate in July in spite of the restraining influence of the summer sales. The increase in the first seven months of the year was 4 per cent, suggesting the cost of living will rise by nearer 7 than 6 per cent in 1980 as a whole.

Inflation rose 0.9 per cent in July after falling 0.1 per cent in June. Much of the rise resulted from the annual increase in controlled rent levels announced by the Government, but furniture, gas and fresh vegetables also rose.

Summer sales reduced the average price of some items. Fresh fruit was also cheaper.

Dustmen go back to work in Warsaw

WARSAW — Striking

dustmen returned to work in all sections of Warsaw yesterday but bus drivers at two depots walked out for higher pay, dissidents said.

The dustmen, who had been on strike since Tuesday, resumed work after accepting an agreement including wage rises, promises of meat supplies in their special shops and improved working conditions.

The dissident Self-Defence Committee (KOR) said that police had released one of the leaders of the striking dustmen after holding him for seven hours. This marked the first time police had taken any action against strikers since labour unrest broke out at the beginning of July.

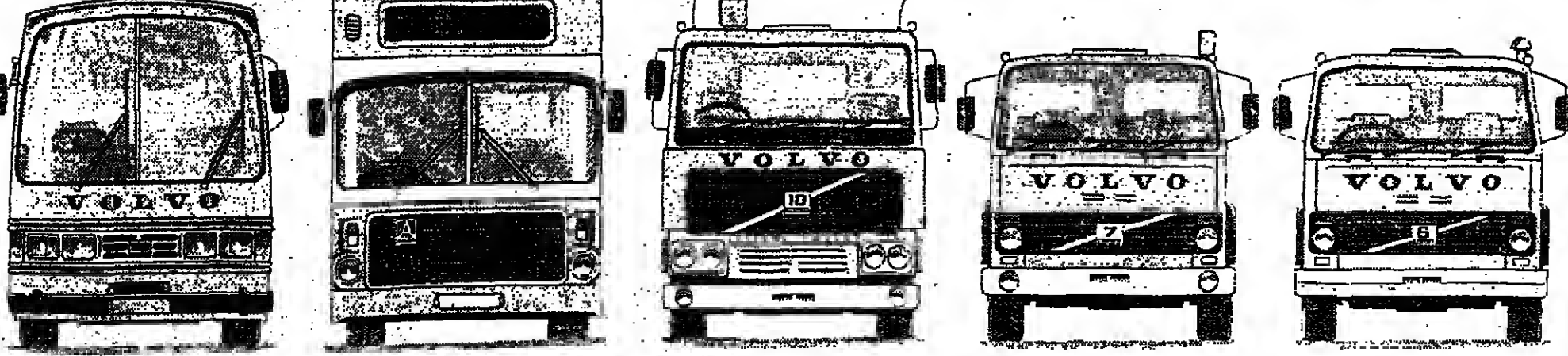
Volvo buys components from over 300 British manufacturers. To the tune of over £100 million in the current year. That makes Volvo Britain's motor component industry's biggest overseas customer.

Volvo has invested over £30 million in its British manufacturing plant at Irvine. Which turns out a third of all the trucks Volvo sells in the UK. And every Volvo double decker bus.

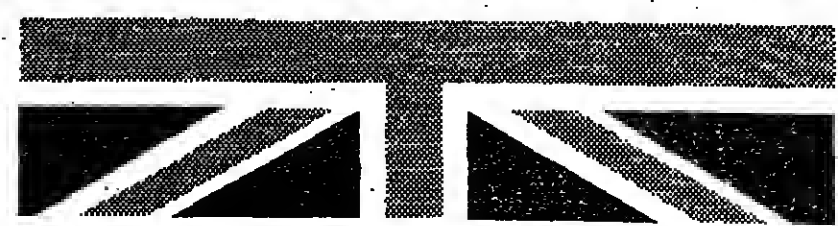
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VOLVO



AMERICAN NEWS

Jurek Martin, David Buchan and Nancy Dunne report on the Garden

Carter, Kennedy battle for support of minorities

I BELONG to no organised party. I am a Democrat." Little has changed since Will Rogers, America's homespun humorist, cracked that truism nearly half a century ago, and the party's ask this week—as every four years—is to whip its diverse elements back into line to face the Republicans this autumn.

The loyalists of the 3,331 Democratic delegates assembled in New York's cavernous Madison Square Garden are deeply torn between President Jimmy Carter and Senator Edward Kennedy who is using every possible procedural issue to reverse his defeat in this year's primary elections and wrest the nomination from the President at the last minute.

Both camps—the middle-of-the-road Carter forces and the liberal Kennedy troops have been battling to win the support of the minorities which make up the Democratic Party. The backdrop to the struggle is this ethnically and racially diverse city of 7m people, a suitable microcosm of the party's composition. For several days Senator Kennedy has been harrying around the delegations and caucuses, pitching high his traditional appeal to minorities, and Vice-President Walter Mondale has been leading the effort to try to head him off until President Carter arrives here from Camp David on Wednesday.

"The party is stronger because of its diversity," Mr. Mondale said yesterday in an attempt to put a brave front on the liberal-moderate rift and make it seem just another of the Democrats' amiable eccentricities.

In strongest evidence are the traditional minorities. Women make up half the Democratic delegates compared with only 29 per cent at last month's Republican Convention in

Detroit. This reflects the general appeal to women of the Democratic Party's stand on equal rights and abortion.

Scarcely visible in Detroit, blacks make up 14 per cent of the delegates here this week—up from 11 per cent (which happens to be their share of the total population) at the 1976 Democratic Convention. For good measure, there are also 31 Asian delegates, 19 American Indians, six Hawaiians and three Creoles (from Southern Louisiana).

Minorities have traditionally found a warmer welcome among Democrats than Republicans, who have hauled at setting quotas for minority representation in their party hierarchy. So the fastest growing ethnic minority in the country, Hispanic speaking Hispanics have fielded no less than 203 delegates or 6 per cent of the total, and homosexuals—men and women—number 77 among the over 3,000 delegates and their alternates. Most of the

minority groups, bolder and less backroom Press conferences had pushed for a convention "opened up" to allow delegates to vote for whom they please, in the hope that this will give them greater leverage.

Foreshadowing this confusion inside the Garden were a rag-bag of groups holding an "alternative" convention outside in the streets on Sunday. Ringed by police in a show of security, speakers ranging from farm state Socialists, animal rights activists, anti-nuclear lobbyists to Puerto Rican "freedom fighters."

All this diversity is creating a major problem of organisation for the city and party managers. In Detroit last month, the Republicans were more fortunate; the convention complex was more than big enough to handle all activities, while the city itself was, in good measure, indifferent to what was going on.



This disgruntled Texas farmer gave away buttons leaving his message outside Madison Square Garden.

DEMOCRATIC NATIONAL CONVENTION



NEW YORK

But New York is well. New York. It is not about to cease its unique daily grind simply because a few thousand Democrats and many more Press and other hangers-on have descended on it. Hotels are overflowing and the traffic jams worse than ever, making it difficult for the politicians and Press to hop from caucus to lobby and back to caucus with any ease. Apart from the big area, the Garden is a rabbit warren of back corridors, jammed with the lost vaguely asking the disoriented how to get from A to B.

Moreover, and this is bad news for the Democrats, the Press is grumbling. It is not just that their cherished work spaces are scattered all over the place. The principal grouse is that the convention passes are being issued daily—not as a packet in advance, as with Republicans. The result is that many reporters have had to give up ferreting and digging away for stories to stand for hours in line outside one small office.

Worst of all, New Yorkers are in a somewhat surly mood this week. Their beloved New York Yankees lost three baseball games in a row to the challenging Baltimore Orioles who, it so happens, are owned by Mr. Edward Bennett Williams, leader of the drive to "open" the convention. In each game, the Orioles came dramatically from behind in the late innings. Perhaps there is a moral in this.

Pentagon gives nuclear pledge

BY IAN HARGREAVES IN WASHINGTON

THE PENTAGON, attempting to smoothe ruffled feathers in the NATO Alliance over its disclosure of a modified strategy on nuclear warfare, has told the allies that the changes proposed are evolutionary in character and represent no lessening of America's aversion to the use of the nuclear weapon.

In a message to members of the alliance, Mr. Harold Brown, Defence Secretary, says the U.S. goal is to convince the Soviet Union that any attempt to launch a limited nuclear attack would be met with retaliation against military targets in the Soviet Union.

Nuclear war is not, Mr. Brown says, "a deliberate instrument for achieving our security goals or advancing our interests," but the change of strategy was needed to eliminate the possibility that the Kremlin could use the threat or the reality of limited nuclear warfare as a means of advancing Soviet interests.

At home, the Pentagon has also been soothing burt feelings because it has become clear that Mr. Edmund Muskie, Secretary of State, was also not informed that President Jimmy Carter had signed Presidential Directive No. 59 authorising the

change to strategy.

The Pentagon argument is that the directive has been the subject of detailed consideration at the level of officials for several years and had therefore not crossed Mr. Muskie's desk since he took office in April.

A similar argument is advanced to the allies who, according to Mr. Brown's message, were briefed on the directive at a meeting in Norway in June. Mr. Brown had intended to announce the Presidential endorsement of the directive in 10 days' time, but was forced to clarify the position following Press leaks.

Census claims come to court

BY OUR WASHINGTON CORRESPONDENT

U.S. CENSUS BUREAU officials are bracing themselves for a series of court cases starting next week, alleging undercounting among other things, which could prevent them delivering the official results of this year's count to the President by January 1, as required.

A U.S. District Court in Detroit is set to hear the first of four suits filed against the bureau and more suits are expected.

So far the suits have come from Detroit, New York city, New York State and from a group of hispanic citizens in Chicago.

At stake is the future level of federal aid for these areas

and the number of seats they hold in Congress.

It is ironic, from the Government's point of view, that its own heavily advertised plea to ethnic minority groups to participate in the census count are now being used against it in a determined attack by areas which believe they have been undercounted.

Detroit's suit is the most broadly based and will charge that the very methods—statistical and operational—used in the count work against a fair assessment of population in deprived urban neighbourhoods.

New York's case, which was announced last week, centres

more on allegations that the bureau failed to recruit a sufficient number of officers to carry out the count.

The suits are the first of their kind in the U.S. and there is consequently no common view on either their outcome or likely duration.

The initial Detroit hearing is expected to last a week and to consist mainly of rival expert testimony, but further appeals and hearings are likely.

The Census Bureau is also well aware that beyond the four groups which have already taken legal action lies a large number of discontented city mayors with predominantly black inner city populations.

NY seeks further \$900m loan guarantees

By David Lascelles in New York

NEW YORK, still struggling to extricate itself from its financial problems yesterday said it would have to borrow even more money and raise taxes again to bridge next year's expected budget deficit and keep the city going till 1984.

But though the announcement contained few surprises, the plan is unlikely to go down well either with New York's hard-pressed residents, or with Washington, which has little patience with New York's problems.

Mayor Edward Koch told a Press conference at City Hall that New York had asked the U.S. Treasury for \$900m (£579m) in new Federal loan guarantees. This is the maximum available under a standby arrangement which was tagged on to the 1978 Federal financial rescue package, from which New York has already drawn \$450m.

Although the Treasury is authorised to grant these new loan guarantees, approval is not automatic, and there is always a possibility that it may turn down all or part of the request if it does not think New York is exercising tight enough control over its budget.

Mr. Koch also proposed a 20-cent increase in the city's real estate tax rate, and various other measures, including an expansion of the city's lucrative off-track betting monopoly. He did not, however, propose to increase the city's 5 per cent sales tax or the city income tax, as had been widely feared.

Mr. Koch yesterday put New York's expected 1982 budget deficit for the year starting July 1, 1981 at \$750m on a budget of about \$130m. This is considerably less than the \$1.2bn that officials mentioned last month after the city reached a generous wage agreement with its municipal unions, but it is also somewhat higher than the \$450m given last week by the city's comptroller, Mr. Harrison Goldin.

The original Federal rescue was supposed to get New York back on its feet financially by the end of next year, so that it could borrow on its own account again for the first time since 1975. However, despite some highly unpopular budget-paring by Mr. Koch, it is quite obvious that this deadline will not now be met.

If the present plan succeeds, a new deadline might realistically be set for 1984-1985.

Storm floods Texas coast

BROWNSVILLE—The remnants of Hurricane Allen dumped more rain on southern Texas yesterday, forcing the evacuation of about 200 people.

Residents left their homes in Alice and Kingsville in the coastal area where flood waters were reported to be up to 4.5 ft deep.

As the storm—which has been downgraded to a tropical depression—moves slowly across northern Mexico, forecasters expect tides at Baffin Bay near Kingsville to be some 9 ft higher than normal.

Allen caused no direct injuries or deaths in Texas, either as the hurricane battered the coast or as the tropical storm that cut into the state, but a series of tornadoes arising from it injured about 20 people.

AP

OVERSEAS NEWS

Iran Parliament gives vote of confidence to new PM

BY PATRICK COCKBURN IN TEHRAN

THE IRANIAN Parliament yesterday gave a vote of confidence to the new Prime Minister, Mr. Mohammed Ali Rajai, by 153 votes out of 196. Twenty-four Deputies voted against, with 19 abstentions.

A strict Moslem, Mr. Rajai is not a member of the Islamic Republican Party which dominates Parliament, but he is very close to it.

He will now form his own Cabinet, but his nominations for Cabinet posts must be confirmed by President Abol Hasan Bani-Sadr, under the Constitution. The formation of the Cabinet may well be attended by the same disputes between Parliament and President which delayed the nomination of a Prime Minister for the whole of last month.

It is not clear if Mr. Rajai reached an agreement on the members of his Cabinet with President Bani-Sadr before being nominated, but relations between the two are distinctly cool.

In a recent speech, President Bani-Sadr said: "Mr. Rajai listens to others, but then does exactly what he wants to do."

The President has reportedly insisted that most of the economic Ministries should remain in the hands of his supporters. It is likely that Mr. Ali Reza Nowbari, Governor of the Central Bank, who has a good track record and is a close supporter of the President, will keep his post.

Having suffered a defeat over the nomination of the

Prime Minister, President Bani-Sadr may well believe that Mr. Rajai and the Islamic Republican Party will be unable to assert executive authority when faced with the same economic and political problems with which he himself has been grappling for the past six months.

Our Foreign Staff writes: The Anglican Bishop of Iran yesterday said he was astonished and appalled that his secretary, Miss Jean Waddell, was being held there on spying charges.

Bishop Dehghani-Tafti, who is now in England after having to leave Iran because of threats against him, claimed the people responsible for seizing Miss Waddell were "carrying out a vendetta."

India to ease industrial curbs

BY K. K. SHARMA IN NEW DELHI

LICENSING restrictions which have seriously hampered the expansion of India's "large industrial houses," and branches of foreign companies, are to be lifted.

The move, part of the Indian Government's recently-unveiled new industrial policy, confirms a more sympathetic attitude towards the country's private-sector industry.

Companies operating within 24 categories considered vital for reviving the stagnant economy—this includes more than half the companies operating in the manufacturing sector—will be allowed "automatic growth" at 25 per cent over the next five years.

Industries to benefit from the change include most heavy and engineering units, almost all drug and pharmaceutical factories, cement factories, and plants manufacturing capital

goods. With them, "associated ancillaries" will be allowed to grow.

In the past, the Monopolies and Restrictive Trade Practices Act (MRTP) and the Foreign Exchange Regulation Act (FERA), have effectively hanned growth in the "large industrial houses"—companies with assets of Rs 200m (£10.9m) or more—and on foreign-owned companies.

These Acts were aimed at checking expansion in so-called monopolies, companies which are now seen to be among the few with the funds and expertise needed to re-invigorate the country's industrialisation programme.

Foreign companies will benefit equally, winning supplies of raw materials, support from public-sector financial institutions, and the right to market their products freely.

The concessions to the private sector have been allowed because of the need to stimulate stagnant industrial investment and production. "The Government has reviewed the question of growth of industries in the context of the growing costs of capital goods, raw materials, energy supplies and other inputs. Coupled with this is the fact that competition has become increasingly severe for Indian companies, particularly in export markets."

Industrial production actually fell between 1978 and 1979 because of power shortages, transport bottlenecks and raw material shortages. There has also been a marked lack of interest in setting up new production capacity because of licensing restrictions.

The new policy has been widely welcomed by industry, but its implementation has still to begin.

Begin chides Sadat over accords

BY DAVID LENNON IN TEL AVIV

THE RECENT deterioration of relations between Israel and Egypt was underlined yesterday by Israel's decision to release the text of a letter which Prime Minister Menachem Begin sent to President Anwar Sadat last week.

In the letter, Mr. Begin accused Egypt of breaches of good faith and of the provisions of the Camp David accords on which the Peace Treaty between the two countries is founded.

Jerusalem is irritated by what it sees as a growing Egyptian propaganda campaign to blame Israel for the failure to make any progress in the negotiations on autonomy for the Palestinians living in the Israeli-occupied West Bank and Gaza Strip.

The talks were suspended by President Sadat early in May, after a year of fruitless discussions on the degree of self-

rule to be granted to the Palestinians. Plans to restart the talks last week were abandoned by Egypt after the Knesset (Israeli Parliament) passed a law proclaiming all Jerusalem as the capital of Israel.

Israel is angry about statements by Egyptian officials that Mr. Begin's letter to President Sadat has further renewed the possibility of renewing the autonomy talks. Because of this, it was decided to publish the letter to allow people to judge for themselves whether or not the Premier's letter is indeed "negative," as claimed by Egypt.

In his letter, which was in reply to an earlier message from President Sadat, the Premier chided the Egyptian leader for having broken off the negotiations four times and said

that by voting against Israel in the United Nations general assembly last month, Egypt had contradicted the terms of the peace agreement.

On Jerusalem, Mr. Begin wrote: "I have never mislaid you, nor anybody else. Time and again I repeated that Jerusalem, to its entirety, is the capital of Israel—a city reunited and indivisible for all generations."

In a similarly unrelenting tone, the Premier also wrote that the Israeli settlements in the occupied territories are "legal and legitimate," and "none of them will ever be removed."

Meanwhile, a Knesset committee yesterday condemned as "totally false" allegations that Mr. Begin had banned the investigation into car bomb attacks against West Bank mayors in June.

Vanuatu threat to deport rebels' foreign backers

PORT VILA—The Government of Vanuatu (formerly New Hebrides), now seeking to end a secessionist revolt on the island of Espiritu Santo, threatened yesterday to deport foreign backers of the rebels who did not leave voluntarily.

A Government spokesman said 26 foreigners had been informed through their diplomatic missions that they would be expelled unless they went of their own accord.

An airlift from Papua New Guinea is bringing in more

than 200 troops who will be ready to move against rebels by tomorrow.

A Government official said yesterday: "The foreigners are very lucky to have the opportunity to leave peacefully. They have been wandering around carrying guns and engaging in actions which in any society would not be tolerated."

He thought most would leave of their own accord. "I think they realise the party is over. They know the end is coming."

Reuter

18 arrested in Australian oil drilling protest

PERTH—Eighteen student demonstrators were arrested in the office of Amax Oil Company here yesterday, as protests against exploratory drilling on a site held sacred by Aborigines gathered force. The protests are being directed against drilling at Noonkanbah, in North-West Australia.

The drilling is opposed by trade unionists, churchmen and other Aborigine supporters, as well as the Aborigines. Reuter

High-priced oil is hurting more than trade sanctions, writes Patrick Cockburn in Tehran

Iranian economy waits for political change

THE TRADE sanctions the U.S. and its allies imposed on Iran in April and May had little chance of proving effective. Most European Community countries, observing that Britain's sanctions were largely window dressing, have done little or nothing to impede their Iran trade.

Yet Iranians, from Ministers to factory workers, frequently blame their economic troubles on sanctions. President Abol Hasan Bani-Sadr recently claimed they had led to a 25 per cent increase in import prices, costing Iran \$2.5bn. In South Tehran, disconsolate lorry drivers, their vehicles immobilised for lack of spares and tyres, believe sanctions have caused the shortages.

The economy is undoubtedly in a bad way. Inflation is running at 50 per cent, factories are working at 40 per cent capacity, and oil revenues do not cover foreign exchange outflows. But this is primarily the result of the impact of the revolution on the fragile and chaotic economic system which the Shah created in the five years after the 1973-74 oil price rises.

The only really effective embargo against Iran appears on no statute book and is, ironically, partly self-imposed. Last April, the Oil Ministers

ruled Revolutionary Council decided to raise the price of Iran's oil well above the levels of other Gulf producers. The moment could not have been more ill-chosen. The spot market for crude oil was growing softer by the day, and Saudi Arabia and Iraq, the Organisation of Petroleum Exporting Countries' largest exporters, were producing at high rates.

Japanese will return for contracts from the beginning of the fourth quarter of the year, but oil revenues for 1980 are likely to be only \$13bn, compared with a foreign exchange outflow of \$15bn to \$16bn.

This decision on oil prices is typical of most of Iran's economic policies. More damaging than all the impediments to trade so portentously an-

ounced by President Jimmy Carter and European Community leaders, it is seldom even discussed by politically aware Iranians.

Some officials appreciate the dangers of an economic squeeze. Two weeks ago, President Bani-Sadr noted in a daily diary he publishes in his newspaper how "a translated article from the Financial Times entitled 'The Islamic revolution runs into the sand' was brought to me in which it is said that Iran's economy will be crippled by

winter. This shows the enemy plans to destroy the country's economy."

The President's assessment is over-dramatic. Despite economic troubles, dissatisfaction is some way from boiling point. Reports in the West of political faction fighting, conspiracies, coups, executions, and growing anti-clericalism in Iran tend to conceal the simple fact that the revolution and Ayatollah Khomeini still have general popular support.

Many Iranians have gained financially from the revolution. The Shah's rub for expansion between 1974 and 1978 widened the gap between rich and poor. The palaces of North Tehran stand as gaudy reminders of that era. Villagers found jobs in the construction industry and the small pool of skilled workers benefited from their scarcity value, but Iran remained a cheap labour economy.

In the dying days of the old regime, the Shah tried to end the strikes by awarding wage rises, often of over 100 per cent. When the revolutionaries came to power last year, they increased wages again, and set up the powerful Islamic workers' councils. Overall, unskilled labourers, both in factories and on the land, have seen their wages jump to two or three times the 1978 level.



A portrait of Ayatollah Khomeini watches over the control room at Khars Island oil terminal

Government attempts to control prices have not been fruitful. The real bottleneck for the free flow of supplies is not sanctions but the decrepit import and distribution system. Many major importers from abroad, the traditional businessmen in the bazaar use an endless series of middlemen to get goods to the consumer, which puts up the price.

Imports of basic commodities are being organised without much difficulty: 1.2m tons of wheat, 300,000 tons of meat and 900,000 tons of sugar. The system's real weakness shows itself in the ordering of spares. The lack of spares has put grain unloading equipment at the

Gulf ports out of action, while power stations and factories often depend on fast-diminishing stocks of spares they accumulated last year.

The economy's revival now depends on political developments, on a winner emerging from the present political struggles. The middle class and the unemployed have been hit in employment draw their pay, often much higher than before, whether they do any work or not. It is unlikely that any government will have the political strength to cut wages or the numbers it employs.

In theory, Ayatollah Khomeini's ascetic ideology calls for a movement away from dependence on oil. The April

oil price increase ensured that this occurred, but since then a massive budget deficit has replaced oil as the pillar of the battered economic system.

It is no bad thing to switch from nuclear power stations to village water pumps in a country where half the population is illiterate and life expectancy is the same as in India. But the Iranian economy was created by oil revenues. Even if Iran dispenses with all luxuries, its essential imports of food, machinery and spare parts will remain at a high level. This cannot be changed overnight. Oil revenue has to increase, and any Iranian Government of the future which omits to do so will be unable to survive.

هنگامی که

W. German trade surplus with Comecon falls

By Leslie Collett in Berlin

WEST GERMANY'S long-standing surplus in trade with the Communist countries has dwindled to its lowest level in many years.

This reflects efforts by the state trading companies to reduce their indebtedness to West Germany, their most important Western creditor.

In the first half of this year, West German exports to the Comecon countries and China rose only 3.8 per cent, compared with the same period last year, to DM 9.4bn (£2.25bn). German imports from these countries, however, rose 24 per cent to DM 6.4bn. The DM 1bn export surplus compares with DM 2.3bn in the first six months of 1979.

West German companies have realised that unless they help find markets for the products of the Communist countries, they will not be able to sustain a high level of exports to them over a longer period of time.

Soviet Union exports to West Germany rose 18.6 per cent to DM 3.7bn, but imports expanded 22.3 per cent to DM 3.5bn largely as a result of higher prices for Soviet oil and natural gas.

In all of 1979 the Soviet Union achieved its first surplus with West Germany of DM 800m.

Exports to China from West Germany actually fell 18.9 per

cent this year to DM 1.1bn while imports from China soared 60.6 per cent to DM 676m. In the first half of last year, China occupied second place among Communist countries, after the Soviet Union, as an importer of West German products.

Exports to China are expected to recover in the second half of this year when additional contracts are expected to show up in the trade statistics.

The second place position is again occupied by Poland which took 16.5 per cent more West German exports than last year or DM 1.3bn. West German imports from Poland rose 21.2 per cent to DM 1.2bn. Poland's trade deficit for all of last year was already halved to DM 300m compared with 1978.

Czechoslovakia managed to achieve a rare surplus in its trade with West Germany with only 4 per cent to DM 883m while imports from Czechoslovakia rose 29.7 per cent to DM 904m.

Hungary boosted its exports to West Germany by 10.8 per cent to DM 941m while its imports sank 2 per cent to DM 1.1bn. Romanian imports to West Germany were curtailed by a sharp 19.2 per cent to DM 895m while its deliveries rose 40.5 per cent to DM 874m.

Daimler to build parts centre

By Kevin Done in Frankfurt

DAIMLER-BENZ, one of the leading West German motor vehicle manufacturers, has signed a contract with China to open a spare parts centre and repair workshop in Peking. It is the first West German car maker to establish such a presence in the Chinese capital.

The contract was signed in Peking with the China National Machinery Import and Export Corporation by Herr Heinz Hoppe, the Daimler-Benz board member with overall responsibility for sales.

His visit to Peking coincides with the arrival of a West German trade mission led by Graf Otto Lambsdorff, Federal Economics Minister, who is leading a 33-member West German delegation to the first meeting of the Sino-German Economic Commission. The Commission was established under the economic co-operation agreement signed by Bonn and Peking in October last year.

Daimler-Benz, which has followed Toyota of Japan in establishing a vehicle servicing centre in Peking, has some 4,000 cars and commercial vehicles in China. Beyond this agreement it is continuing negotiations on the commercial vehicle side on a range of items, including the modernisation of Chinese truck production.

Volkswagen, the leading West German car manufacturer, is also involved in talks with the Chinese over the construction of a car plant.

CHINA'S MERCHANT FLEET EXPANSION

Newcomer steams into crowded waters

By Tony Walker in Peking

CHINA, which has been steadily building up its merchant fleet, has signalled that it intends to compete more aggressively for international shipping business.

The recent joint venture agreement with Sir Yue-Kong Pao, the Hong Kong shipping tycoon, will help Chinese shippers where they are weakest—in access to established sources of business and assistance in setting up a worldwide shipping network.

Chinese shipping companies are suffering from being relative newcomers in a highly competitive field.

Sir Yue-Kong Pao, head of the successful World Wide Shipping group, is expected to be able to deliver for Chinese shippers a bigger share of regional cargoes, at the same time passing on helpful advice about fleet and port development.

The joint venture, to be known as the International United Shipping and Investment Company, will use Chinese ships on charter from, among others, the China Ocean Shipping Company (COSCO).

With low labour costs and cheap bunkering facilities, China is well-placed to compete against the conference lines, and, indeed, Chinese shippers are offering freight rates 15-30 per cent lower than those charged by the conferences.

China's low-cost structure already appears to be paying off in its quest for new business, particularly in commodities, which the containerised conference lines are turning away from.

Last December, for example, China signed an agreement with Malaysia to carry bulk latex to British and other European ports.

The size of the Chinese fleet remains something of a mystery. According to some estimates, China has up to 700 merchant ships, but the Chinese themselves, in a New China news agency despatch last week, said their fleet comprised 400 ships with a total cargo tonnage of 7m.

Whether the fleet size is 400 or 700 ships, China is a potentially formidable maritime power. And with its rapidly increasing trade China is making sure its shippers are reaping the benefits.

Cosco, in a recent statement, said that last year the Chinese fleet transported about 70 per cent of the tonnage required by foreign trade agreements to be carried in Chinese ships.

Cosco said it had now undertaken to transport all trade cargo to and from Japan and North Korea assigned to Chinese shipping in agreements with those countries.

It also planned to do the same to other ports.

One problem for the Chinese in their efforts to step up their shipping activities is the outdated nature of much of their cargo-handling equipment. Japanese coal and oil importers, for example, complain of slow unloading from Chinese ships. This, they claim, adds sharply to costs.

The Chinese are attempting to modernise their fleet by buying relatively new ships and an active shipbuilding pro-

gramme. Last year, China spent more than \$200m on second-hand vessels.

According to the China Trade Report, a monthly trade review, the Chinese last year bought 48 such ships, ranging from tankers to ferries. A reflection

China ordered eight such ships from Hong Kong shipbuilders—China's largest shipbuilding order.

It is also embarking on a modernisation programme for five key ports, due to be finished by the mid-1980s. The

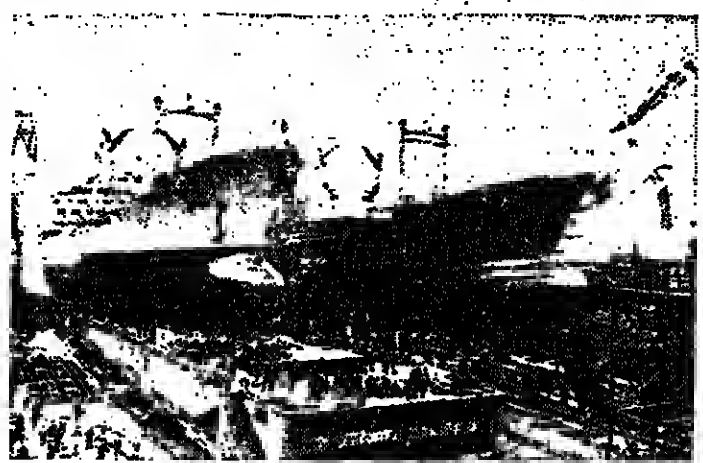
ports since 1973. Shanghai, China's busiest port city, has added 16 berths for freighters up to 25,000 tons plus six berths for special cargoes like oil.

In their drive to earn foreign exchange from all possible sources the Chinese have even gone into the cruise ship business. They are now running services between Hong Kong, Shanghai, Canton and Bangkok and are talking about spreading their activities to the west coast of America, Europe and Australia.

Tourists from those places may again be encouraged to take a slow boat to China.

Regent Shipping of Hong Kong has commissioned the China Corporation of Shipbuilding Industry to build two bulk carriers worth \$28m, reports the Hong Kong Trade Development Council. Both these vessels are to be 27,000 tons dwt. The Regent contract is reported to be the first one the Chinese corporation has won from a Hong Kong company for new shipbuilding.

The Australian National Line and Queensland Alumina have awarded a contract to build two bulk carriers fuelled by coal to Mitsubishi Heavy Industries. The steam-turbine carriers, each of 75,000 dwt will cost some US\$10m and will be used to carry bauxite from Weipa, on the Gulf of Carpentaria, to Queensland Alumina's refinery at Gladstone in Southern Queensland. The first is expected to enter service in late 1982, and the second early the following year.



Two freighters near completion in Shanghai's Chongming shipyard.

Swiss companies negotiate oil contracts with Iraq

By Brij Khindaria in Bern

A GROUP of Swiss oil importers is negotiating with Iraq to buy unrefined petroleum to reduce their dependence and purchases on the Rotterdam spot market.

The group, comprised of independent operators not linked to the large oil multinationals, has told the Swiss Government that it would like to buy Iraqi oil under long term contracts for refining in Switzerland or neighbouring countries. No specific quantities have been negotiated so far.

At a meeting of the joint Switzerland-Iraq Trade Commission earlier this month, in Bern, Iraq indicated its readiness to become a significant supplier of oil to Switzerland, making up shortages resulting from the drop in Iranian oil exports.

Switzerland has never previously bought oil directly from Iraq because of its long-standing relations with the

regime of the late Shah of Iran. But the troubles in Iran have forced the independent operators to turn to the expensive spot markets.

Pressure to seek long term oil supply contracts is being increased following last month's announcements by the U.S. Government of its intention to recommence buying oil for storage which is expected to lead to firmer spot oil prices.

Iraq, which is Switzerland's second largest Arab customer, but exports almost nothing in return, is keen to use oil to redress its trade deficit. It has told the Swiss that it prefers to deal with State-owned oil importers but has indicated that it may bend this policy provided that it can work out a satisfactory long-term supply contract with an association of buyers. It is unwilling to deal with separate independent companies.

Hitachi in pact with Bechtel

By Richard C. Hanson in Tokyo

HITACHI, JAPAN'S largest general electrical machinery maker, has bolstered its competitive strength in the nuclear reactor engineering and construction field through a long-term technical contract with the giant Bechtel group.

Under a 10-year agreement, Bechtel Power Corporation, a member of the U.S. group based in San Francisco, will provide Hitachi with the technology it has developed for planning, designing and building boiling water reactor (BWR) plants and related facilities in Japan. The agreement, Hitachi says, will also strengthen its ability to procure overseas business, including conventional thermal power plant projects.

The agreement between the two companies does not exclude Bechtel's co-operation with other Japanese electrical equipment makers. In the past, Bechtel has co-operated in Japan with Hitachi and others on plant construction and engineering. Hitachi, however, expects to gain an edge on its major competitor in Japan, Toshiba Corporation, which currently is the industry leader in nuclear equipment as a result of the closer ties to Bechtel.

Toshiba says it has no plans at the moment to enter into a similar arrangement with a foreign company.

Zeebrugge port to be expanded

BRUSSELS — The Belgian Government is to spend more than BFR 20bn (£300m) to expand the port of Zeebrugge to enable it to receive carriers of up to 125,000 tonnes bringing liquefied natural gas from Algeria.

Part of the finance has already been committed, and the project is to be completed by 1986, when the Belgian utility, Distrigaz, plans to start taking LNG deliveries from Algeria under a contract already agreed.

Under the contract, which took effect at the end of last month, Bendix will staff, operate and maintain the computerised air traffic control equipment at 31 civil and military airports. The equipment was installed by Lockheed Corporation under a \$60m contract.

AP-DJ

Big Saudi deal for Bendix
BALTIMORE — Bendix Field Engineering Corporation, the technical-services subsidiary of Bendix Corporation, has signed a \$337m (£140m) contract with the Saudi Government to operate and maintain the Kingdom's air traffic control system.

Under the contract, which took effect at the end of last month, Bendix will staff, operate and maintain the computerised air traffic control equipment at 31 civil and military airports. The equipment was installed by Lockheed Corporation under a \$60m contract.

AP-DJ

Parkinson foresees rise in UK-Argentine sales

By Robert Lindley in Buenos Aires

THE VALUE OF UK trade with Argentina should rise this year to \$700m-\$800m, said Mr. Cecil Parkinson, the Trade Minister, at the end of a six-day visit with a group of British businessmen.

In 1979 the UK sold \$280m worth of goods to Argentina and bought \$290m worth.

The areas in which British businessmen found the most interest for their products were power generation and port development, Mr. Parkinson said.

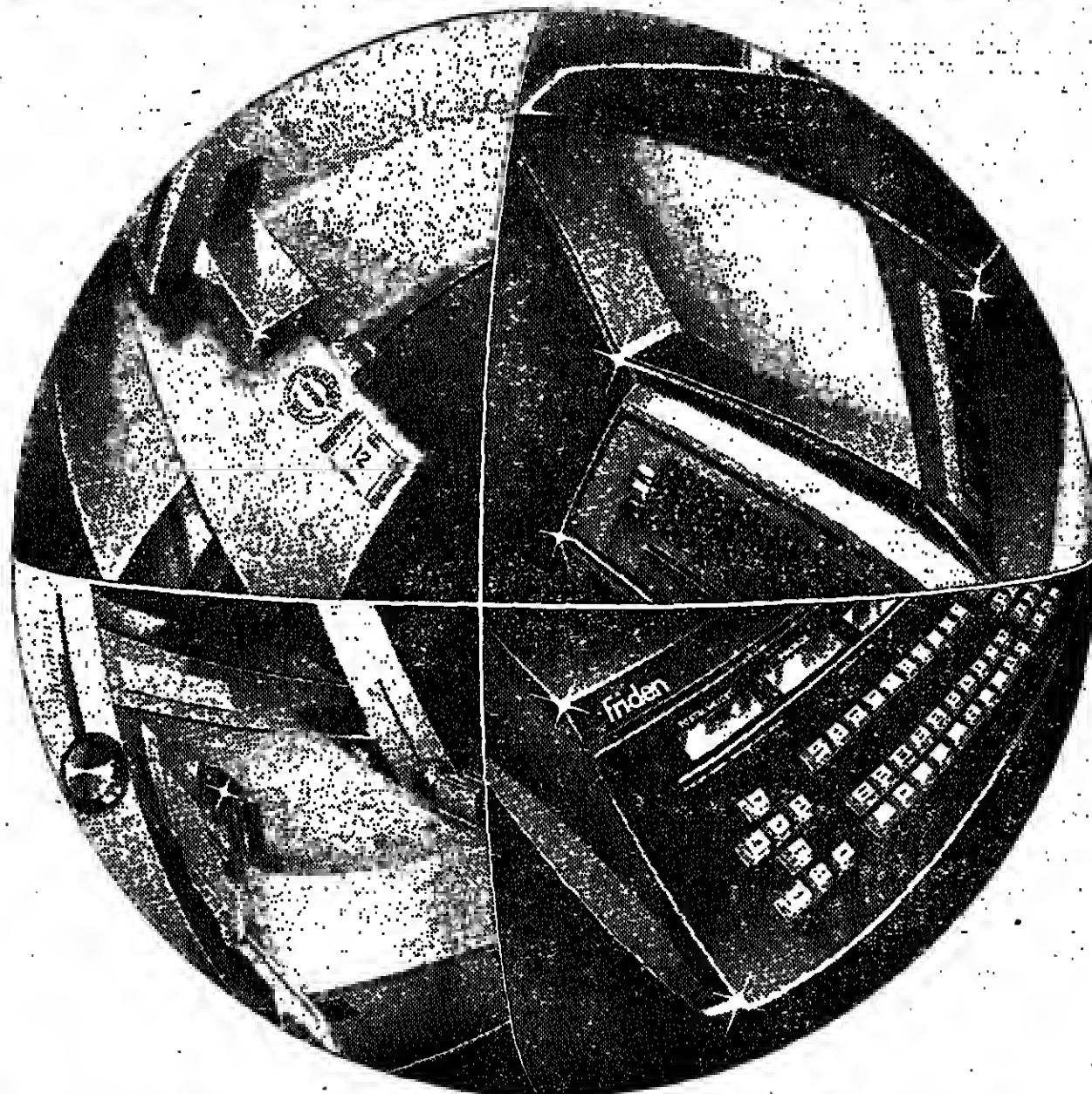
Following talks with Argentinian leaders, Mr. Parkinson said the two countries are

approaching their economic problems in similar ways. Both are seeking to liberalise their economies, and both have a profound dislike for the EEC's common agricultural policy.

Mr. Parkinson's visit follows the resumption of full diplomatic relations between the two countries last March. Ambassadors were exchanged after a four-year break caused by an incident near the Falkland Islands.

The visit is the first by a UK Trade Minister for a decade. Mr. Parkinson left for Santiago, Chile, on Sunday.

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UK NEWS

Shell and Esso to start developing Tern oilfield

BY RAY DAFTER, ENERGY EDITOR

SHELL AND Esso have agreed to proceed with development of their Tern oilfield, 75 miles north-east of Unst in the Shetland Islands. The project will cost hundreds of millions of pounds.

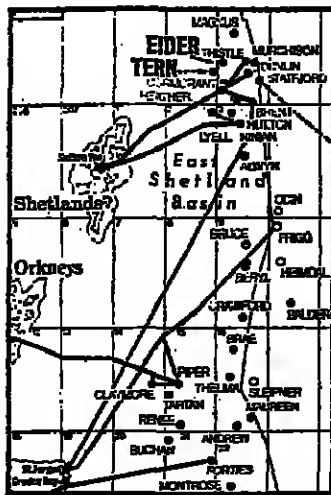
Oil from the medium-sized field should begin flowing North Sea production levels late in 1985. The oil will be transported ashore from a conventional fixed production platform via the Brent pipeline system into Sullom Voe, in the Shetland Islands.

Shell and Esso plan to feed natural gas associated with the oil into the Western Leg gas gathering system, to St. Fergus, near Peterhead, Scotland.

Tern has estimated recoverable reserves of about 140m barrels of oil. According to Shell officials, but for the recent oil price increases the field would have been too small to develop using a conventional platform.

Shell and Esso, which have joint interests in the discovery, in block 210/25, are expected to submit a development application to the Government within the next 12 to 18 months. Meanwhile, they are working on a production project for another nearby discovery, the Eider Field.

No development decision has been taken on Eider, which is a smaller field, with about 120m barrels of recoverable reserves. But Shell and Esso hope that the field, in block 211/16, will be in production by 1987.



Marathon Oil has announced the successful results of an important delineation well drilled in block 16/7, north-east of Aberdeen. The well helps to confirm the commercial potential of the Brae Field.

The drilling-rig Aladdin tested five geological zones within a 572 ft section of oil-bearing rock. The tests resulted in flow rates of 2,387, 4,366, 3,169, 3,900 and 4,036 barrels a day respectively.

The oil was of a light quality — its gravity ranged from 40.4 to 50 degrees API — and the gas/oil ratios ranged from 3,640 to 7,312 cu ft per barrel. Exploration, II and E (a subsidiary of Kerr-McGee Corporation).

covery-well, and 140 miles north-east of the Scottish coast, was drilled to a total depth of 13,280 ft.

Marathon and its partners have agreed to proceed with exploitation of reserves in the southern part of Brae — the other end of block 16/7 from the latest well. Production is due to begin in about two years' time.

The interests in Brae are Marathon (operator), British National Oil Corporation, Bow Valley Exploration, Kaiser Exploration, LL and E (a subsidiary of Louisiana Land and Exploration), Saga Petroleum, Sovereign Oil and Gas, and Sunningdale Oils (a subsidiary of Kerr-McGee Corporation).

Our Shipping Correspondent writes: After several months' delay, the Government has confirmed an £18m order for two offshore patrol vessels. Work on the two ships has started at Hall Russell, the Aberdeen ship-builder.

The vessels, ordered by the Ministry of Defence, are the first of a new class which will replace existing "Ton" class patrol vessels. They will perform the dual roles of fishery protection within the 200-mile UK extended fishery limits, and protection of offshore oil installations.

In common with Cammell Laird at Birkenhead, Hall Russell has been suffering because of the delays in promised public-sector orders.

Michael Donne and Lynton McLain look at domestic air fares

One flight that will be cheaper

THE DECISION by British Midland Airways to cut the Gatwick-Belfast return air fare from October 1 by £10 to £66 is not thought likely to be the start of a new round of fare-cutting by airlines on domestic air routes, no matter how anxious they may be to stimulate traffic at a time of recession.

The new British Midland rate undercuts British Airways' Heathrow-Belfast Shuttle fare by £20 return. The Midland rate was already £10 return cheaper before yesterday's decision. British Airways will have to decide whether to match the Midland rate.

Late yesterday it had not made up its mind. It seemed clear that there was no enthusiasm in British Airways or other airlines for yet another air fares battle comparable to what has already taken place on the North Atlantic and is still building up on short-haul European international air routes.

The view in British Airways is that British Midland can probably get away with its proposed cut, because it uses cheaper-to-fly Viscount turbo-propeller aircraft out of Gatwick, against British Airways' Trident jets out of Heathrow.

BA still carries the bulk of the London-Belfast traffic, about 80 per cent to British Midland's 20 per cent, but Midland believes it can push its share up to about 25 per cent by the end of this year.

Even if that were achieved,

BA would still dominate the market, and though it may make a token gesture by trimming its fare a little it seemed unlikely yesterday that it would seek to match the Midland rate for the sake of 5 per cent of the market.

What troubles British Airways and other major domestic airlines, including Midland, is the uncertain future, stemming from continued rises in fuel and other costs.

Earlier this year, as a result of increased charges by the fuel companies, the British Airports Authority, Civil Aviation Authority, the domestic airlines and other aircraft users as a whole complained bitterly that their costs in 1980 would rise by as much as £100m.

To compensate for this from April 1 fares on most internal air routes rose by an average of 12.5 per cent.

This put the British Airways' Heathrow-Glasgow - Edinburgh Shuttle fare up from £42 single to £47, £84 to £94 return and Heathrow-Belfast from £38 single to £43, £76 to £86 return.

British Midland's Gatwick-Belfast rate at that time rose from £38.50 single to £38, £73 to £76 return.

Since then all airlines' costs have continued to rise. Only recently it was made clear by both the Civil Aviation Authority and the British Airports Authority that before the end of the current financial year further increases in charges

were inevitable, though the amounts have yet to be fixed.

To meet this situation many airlines flying domestic routes have thought of asking the Civil Aviation Authority for further fare rises from about October-November on to see them through the winter.

So far no applications have been filed, but they may well be in the next few weeks. If they are Gatwick-Belfast may well be one of the few routes where fares this winter will be cut.

Even if the airlines manage to absorb their increased costs this winter, and either forgo or seek only minimal fare rises, it seems inevitable that they will seek fare rises from April 1 next year.

The British Midland decision to cut Gatwick-Belfast fares, therefore, is seen in the domestic airlines as a bold attempt to win traffic by flying smaller, cheaper aircraft than a competitor.

Partly perhaps from British Airways itself the industry wishes Midland success with its venture, but does not seem anxious to emulate the decision on other major trunk routes.

It is tempting to think of Mr. Michael Bishop, chairman of British Midland, as an embryonic Sir Freddie Laker of domestic air routes.

Nothing could be further from the commercial objectives of the airline, though Mr. Bishop said yesterday that he had an

"immeasurable amount of respect for Laker's operations."

Laker was applauded as champion of free enterprise in international aviation when he started the low-fares revolution on the North Atlantic. His first Skytrain will be three years old next month.

Sir Freddie launched his attack on high fares in a high-volume market dense with airlines he felt could be made to compete for the benefit of passengers.

British Midland shares Laker's desire to make the consumer benefit from more competition and lower fares. But in other respects it insists it is not a "Laker-type" line.

On the London-Belfast service this benefit has come from "our own cost-effectiveness," Mr. Bishop said yesterday.

British Midland's low fares policy on the route has already paid off in terms of an increase in volume of traffic, which rose by 10 per cent from January to July this year to 58,607 passengers compared with the same period last year.

The rise would have been even higher, said Mr. Bishop, had the airline operated from Heathrow rather than Gatwick, but its application to do so was turned down by the Civil Aviation Authority last year.

Mr. Bishop insists that he plans nothing similar to Laker's broad attack on fares on Atlantic routes. "We are going forward quietly and aim to consolidate before tackling more volume routes," he said.

British Midland has operated domestic air services for 27 of the 40 years of its existence. Until it started on the London-Belfast route none of its 14 domestic routes had anything approaching a high volume of passenger traffic.

Typical is the East Midlands Airport-to-Glasgow service. This serves 42,000 passengers a year, compared with the estimated 500,000 carried by British Airways on its main trunk routes from London to Scotland.

BA carried 617,000 on the Heathrow-Belfast route last year.

Mr. Bishop believes that the State airline will be "very vulnerable" however it responds to British Midland's attack on fares.

If BA cuts Belfast-London Shuttle fares in response to competition, it must justify to Scottish travellers why similar action cannot be taken on Edinburgh-Glasgow Shuttles, Mr. Bishop said.

Success for British Midland in boosting its share of the London-Belfast passenger market to 25 per cent as planned, will help provide the base for further attacks on the lucrative trunk air routes in Britain.

These include London to Aberdeen, Glasgow, Edinburgh and Manchester, all routes which could withstand more competition.

Mr. Bishop is unlikely to launch similar attacks on fares on the 13 other domestic routes it operates, if only because it has a monopoly on them.

Retailers rewarded by upturn in sales volume for June

BY DAVID MARSH AND RAYMOND SNODDY

THE VOLUME of spending in the shops picked up in June from the depressed levels in May, partly in response to retailers' efforts to weather the recession through sales promotions and price cuts.

High Street activity during the early summer was down fairly sharply compared with the buoyant first quarter. But revised figures issued yesterday by the Department of Trade show that sales have been less hard hit by the economic downturn than was thought earlier.

Consumer credit granted by retailers and hire purchase companies also increased in June compared with May, though the totals were again well down from earlier in the year.

Retail sales volume in June, measured by the Department's seasonally adjusted index, rose 1 per cent in June to 101.6 (1976 = 100). This represents a sharp upward revision from the provisional figure of 100.5 published last month.

Sales volume in the second quarter was similar to that in the fourth quarter last year, but dropped by 1.6 per cent compared with the first three months of 1980 when trade was boosted by winter sales and pre-Budget buying.

During the first half of 1980 the average level of trade was about 0.2 per cent above the average for 1979. Compared with the first half of 1979 — when sales were inflated by buying ahead of the July VAT increase — retail activity fell by nearly 1 per cent in volume terms, though it was up 14 per cent in value.

The increase in value terms was well below the inflation rate of about 20 per cent in the first six months. This shows the extent to which retailers have prevented an even bigger volume decline by cutting prices.

Sales by clothing and footwear retailers fell by 4 per cent between the first and second quarters. Spending in mixed goods retailers dropped by 3 per cent and in household goods stores by 2 per cent.

The Retail Consortium, which represents most of Britain's retailers, said yesterday that it was gloomy about the outlook for the next few months after the depressed second quarter. Some summer sales were continuing and it was planning its hopes on a good Christmas period.

Individual retailers, blamed the poor summer as well as recession for the slow sales.

John Lewis said: "It isn't quite as bad as we feared it might be. We are not pessimistic. We might even be through the worst."

Currys also said that sales were holding up reasonably well against a gloomy background.

Mr. Colin Soodford, group commercial director said colour television sets and washing machines were particularly buoyant, but that newer products such as video recorders and microwave ovens were also selling well.

"Volume is holding up generally across the country. But the autumn is going to be hard work. We're less optimistic about the autumn than we were earlier in the year," he said. Boots said the poor weather had affected demand for products such as suntan lotions and films but that people were still spending on the basics.

Boots' first quarter ending June 18 showed an 18 per cent increase. But the increase for the second quarter is expected to be about 15 per cent with little better expected for the autumn.

One bright spot for Boots was a 25 per cent upturn in sales of beer and wine making kits.

AIR SERVICES between London and Peking are expected to start in the first week of November, following talks in Peking last week between British Airways and the Civil Aviation Administration of China, writes Michael Donne.

The air agreement between the two countries was signed in November and was meant to become effective in April. But talks over the details of implementing it have been delayed. The timetable has still to be revealed, but it is understood

that each airline will fly once weekly between London and Peking, via Hong Kong. Eventually, British Airways will fly a direct service.

Each airline will use Boeing 747 Jumbo jets.

One of the major problems in settling the details of the service has been how to divide the revenue. This is now reported to have been agreed but, again, the details are not yet being disclosed.

The Chinese national airline is believed to have asked for a larger share than the normal

50 per cent, despite the fact that British Airways is expected, initially at least, to carry more passengers between London and Peking — most of them businessmen seeking sales in China.

Another question which awaits an answer is whether the Chinese airline is ready to accept that its flights, under UK Government rules, must be to and from Gatwick. British Airways can use Heathrow because it is merely extended into China its existing service from Heathrow to Hong Kong.

BY RAY PERMAN, SCOTTISH CORRESPONDENT

THE GOVERNMENT has no intention of closing Prestwick Airport in Ayrshire, Mr. Norman Tebbit, Trade Under-Secretary, said yesterday.

Speaking at the start of a tour of Scottish airports he said it was time to end the uncertainty about the airport's future.

"Constant speculation that there may be some change in Government policy towards the Scottish lowland airports is totally unfounded and is doing no good at all to Scotland's civil aviation interests," he said.

Prestwick is the only airport in Scotland allowed to receive trans-Atlantic scheduled flights. But several bodies, including British Airways which operates a New York service from the airport, have wanted to transfer flights to Glasgow.

Mr. Tebbit said the Government shared the view of the British Aviation Authority that Prestwick should remain in operation to complement Glasgow and Edinburgh airports.

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Demand for credit 'still strong'

By Peter Riddell, Economics Correspondent

THE UNDERLYING demand for credit remains strong, even after adjusting for the distorting effects of the end of the corset controls on the banks, according to a batch of new surveys from City stockbrokers.

Several circulars have been published in the wake of last week's news of a 5 per cent jump in the money supply in July. All say the implications are worrying, though most analysts believe gilt-edged prices will not fall very far.

Stockbrokers' James Capel estimate that after allowing for the unwinding of the corset distortions, the increase in sterling M2 — the broadly defined money supply — may have been about 1.2 per cent. The brokers estimate that total loan demand has been about £1.45bn. This is roughly the same as experienced in the first month of each of the past three quarters when interest debiting by banks and VAT payments by industry appeared.

Brokers L. Messel draw attention to the broader measures of liquidity published by the Bank of England which are not distorted by official regulations. The brokers conclude that liquidity growth in the past four months has been at a very unhealthy 20 per cent annual rate. They suggest that trade credit has contracted and has been offset by a switch to credit flowing through the banking system.

New Armstrong Meriden plea

BY JOHN GRIFFITHS

THE GOVERNMENT statement rejecting Armstrong Equipment's offer to take over Meriden motor-cycle co-operative was "misleading to the House and to the public," Mr. Harry Hooper, Armstrong's chairman, told Lord Trenchard, Parliamentary Secretary, Industry Department.

In a letter sent yesterday to Lord Trenchard, Mr. Hooper calls on the Government to take a fresh look at the Armstrong proposals. Mr. Hooper told the Financial Times last night that "we still don't want to see Meriden go under. The rescue can still be done."

The reply to the offer given in Parliament stated that "because of the cost to the taxpayer" the Government would not waive nearly £12m in loans and interest. This, says Mr. Hooper, "was totally misleading. We are not talking about a gift to Armstrong. This taxpayers' money has already been lost."

If the Government was to opt to liquidate the co-operative, said by Mr. Hooper to be losing £300,000 a month, "it will be lucky if it sees any of its money."

Armstrong's own estimate, submitted to the Government on June 30, was that at most it might recover £1m from liquidation. Armstrong says that, since then, continuing losses would have eroded even this sum further.

Planning proposals attacked

BY ANDREW TAYLOR

GOVERNMENT PROPOSALS to speed the planning process and introduce charges for planning applications were attacked yesterday by town planners.

The Town and Country Planning Association said that Government proposals to levy planning charges should be scrapped. The Royal Town Planning Institute heavily criticised proposals to speed processing of planning applications as confusing and inadequate.

The association said that the community desired and benefited from planning regulations, and therefore the community should pay for this service. It was fundamentally opposed to making a charge to apply for

Tories will debate rates reform

By Ivor Owen

DEMANDS for radical reform of the domestic rating system will be a dominant feature of this year's Conservative Party Conference, which opens at Brighton on October 7.

Resolutions from constituent parties reflect the growing dissatisfaction with the inequitable operation of the present system with its emphasis on property values rather than ability to pay and the use made of local authority services.

Many Tory MPs have already warned the Government that soaring rate demands coupled with the inflationary pressures of the last year have produced a potentially explosive situation.

Until now Ministers have used Tory MPs' general acceptance of the need to give priority to reducing income tax to fend off calls for action to spread the rates burden more fairly.

They have shown little enthusiasm for resurrecting the pledge in the Conservative election manifesto of October, 1974, to abolish domestic rates.

It was envisaged then that within the lifetime of a parliament, domestic rates would be phased out and replaced by a more broadly based tax related to ability to pay.

One proposal he is being pressed to adopt is that the electoral register should be used as the basis for introducing a generalised household payment for local services, by all adults.

Legal restriction of 'dawn raids' unlikely

BY CHRISTINE MOIR

IF BRITISH companies want stronger powers to force significant shareholders to disclose their interests, they will have to impress their wishes on Government within the next two months.

The Government itself appears to be looking for guidance from companies and the financial community rather than taking the lead in recommending changes to existing statutes.

Since it became known that De Beers covertly acquired nearly 15 per cent of Consolidated Gold Fields late last year, there have been loud cries to strengthen Companies Act provisions on disclosure of holdings above 5 per cent.

However, yesterday's consultative document limits itself to discussing a number of possible changes and couples many of them with warnings of their impracticability in law.

Significantly, also, the document has the status of a discussion paper, a level somewhat below that of a Green Paper

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RESEARCH has appointed three vice-presidents in the Welwyn-based R & D Group. Dr. William L. Burland, vice-president clinical R & D, Dr. C. Robin Gagnell, vice-president research, and Dr. Peter Johnson, vice-president pre-clinical development.

Following the acquisition of Walker Frampton the following appointments have been made to the ERNEST NOTCUTT GROUP Board: Mr. Robert Rayne, Mr. R. Jason, Mr. R. Nelson and Mr. T. F. Wilkinson. Mr. L. L. Makenzie-Sandbach has been appointed chairman and chief executive of Walker Frampton and Mr. R. Anderson, Mr. L. Flue, Mr. R. Nelson and Mr. Wilkinson have joined the board of Walker Frampton.

Mr. J. W. Birkshaw, formerly deputy chairman and managing director and Mr. J. M. Connolly, formerly general manager, have been appointed executive chairman and managing director of COMMERCIAL UNION ASSURANCE COMPANY OF SOUTH AFRICA ("CUSA"). Mr. W. S. Finley has resigned as chairman but will remain on the Board. Mr. W. A. Rutherford and Mr. J. H. van de Linde have been appointed general managers.

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CBI prepares to fight EEC worker directors plan

By JOHN ELLIOTT, INDUSTRIAL EDITOR

The Confederation of British Industry has prepared the ground for a potentially major battle over the EEC's proposed fifth directive on worker directors being processed by the European Parliament.

It has told UK members of the Parliament that it will refuse to support the implementation of the directive if it includes any reference to the statutory enforcement of worker representatives on company boards.

The CBI supports those of the Parliament's members who are trying to water down the draft directive's proposals. But its leaders have made it clear that it has not budged from the total opposition to worker directors it has developed in response to the 1977 Bullock Report on Industrial Democracy.

The CBI emphasised this policy at a recent meeting with the Members of the European Parliament shortly after the Institute of Directors launched a propaganda campaign with a document called 'The Fifth Directive - A Trojan Bullock?'

The EEC has been developing the fifth directive for some eight years. Originally it envisaged worker directors having a third of the seats on the top level of a two-tier company Board structure.

It is moving towards a flexible system to allow a company to opt for either a one-tier or two-tier board structure with workers' representatives being accommodated either on the board itself or in a separate advisory body closely linked to the boardroom.

The European Parliament is expected to produce its version of the directive by the end of the year. But it could then take a further two or three years for the directive to be finalised. After that there would be a transitional period, perhaps stretching almost to the end of the decade, before companies would be forced to take action.

Both the Institute of Directors and the CBI intend to fight a long-term battle. The Institute in particular has decided to use the European Parliament as the first important battleground.

Austin Morris to launch new versions of Maxi

By JOHN GRIFFITHS

REVISED VERSIONS of the Austin Morris 5-door estate models, to be called the 'Maxi 2', were announced yesterday by Austin Morris.

Exterior changes affect the grille, bumpers and other fittings. Inside, seating, instruments and trim are improved and a radio is fitted as standard.

The models should give B.I. a sales fillip additional to the price-cutting campaign launched yesterday on many of its other models.

Maxi is excluded from the latest price cuts, which range from £100 on a Mini to £500 on a Dolomite. Nevertheless, the 'new' versions are still cheaper than Maxis sold at the start of this year. This is because B.I. discounted its price by 10 per cent in March.

'special offer' which continued until June, when the discount was reduced to 5 per cent. The Maxi 2's price is roughly 3 per cent higher than the June level. Thus, the top of the range Maxi 2 1750 HJS, at £4,658, is about £20 cheaper than a model bought in January.

The earlier Maxi price cut had a dramatic effect on sales, lifting it to fifth place in the top 10 list of best sellers in March.

Porsche is extending its anti-rust warranty from six to seven years on new models. The latest 911SC model is claimed to have 21 per cent better fuel economy, a revised 924 Turbo an improvement of 14 per cent. Prices are up by 3.9 per cent on the 911SC (£16,731), and 2.7 per cent on the 924 Turbo (£13,998).

Steering a difficult course to solvency

WHEN I mentioned in Middlesbrough that Workington was to be my next port of call, faces fell the proverbial mile. It is like that everywhere when you mention the Cumbrian port.

Perhaps it is because the town is so far off the beaten track. The many holidaymakers who descend on the Lake District seldom venture as far as this part of the coast.

The town may have its problems but it is not a depressed area. That may sound unusual with unemployment at 10.4 per cent but the mainstay of the economy, British Steel's rail producing works provides jobs for over 4,000 people and two of the other leading manufacturing companies, British Leyland and Thames Board, have both announced expansion plans which should see another 400 jobs created.

This is good news, just the sort that Capt. Malcolm Ditchburn is most anxious to impart. He is, to give him his full title, the senior Trinity House pilot for the Whitehaven and Maryport districts. In effect, he is pilot for Whitehaven and Workington, since Maryport, a few miles up the coast, has long since closed.

'This is a fine port,' he says of Workington. 'It is the only deep water port between Liverpool and the Clyde; the council has improved facilities no end since it took over from British Steel six years ago; and we can handle vessels up to 10,000 tons.'

'We've had our ups and downs. I admit. When steel was in its heyday we used to bring in 1m tons of iron ore a year. That trade has largely ended. Coal has also gone. But in their place we have captured a liquid sulphur trade, soon we shall have a roll-on/roll-off service bringing outland waste from Dounreay destined for Windscale, and coal is on its way back. As one door closes another opens in this part of the world.'

The common view of a pilot's function, I suppose, is that he brings a ship into port, docks it, and in due course takes it back to sea. This is true so far as professional skills are concerned—knowing the channels, manoeuvring a ship through a restricted dock entrance and getting on to the

get the bow past the point before you swing the stern around. I don't know a trickier harbour than Whitehaven, I really don't. And if the wind is coming down from the north-west it can be hell.'

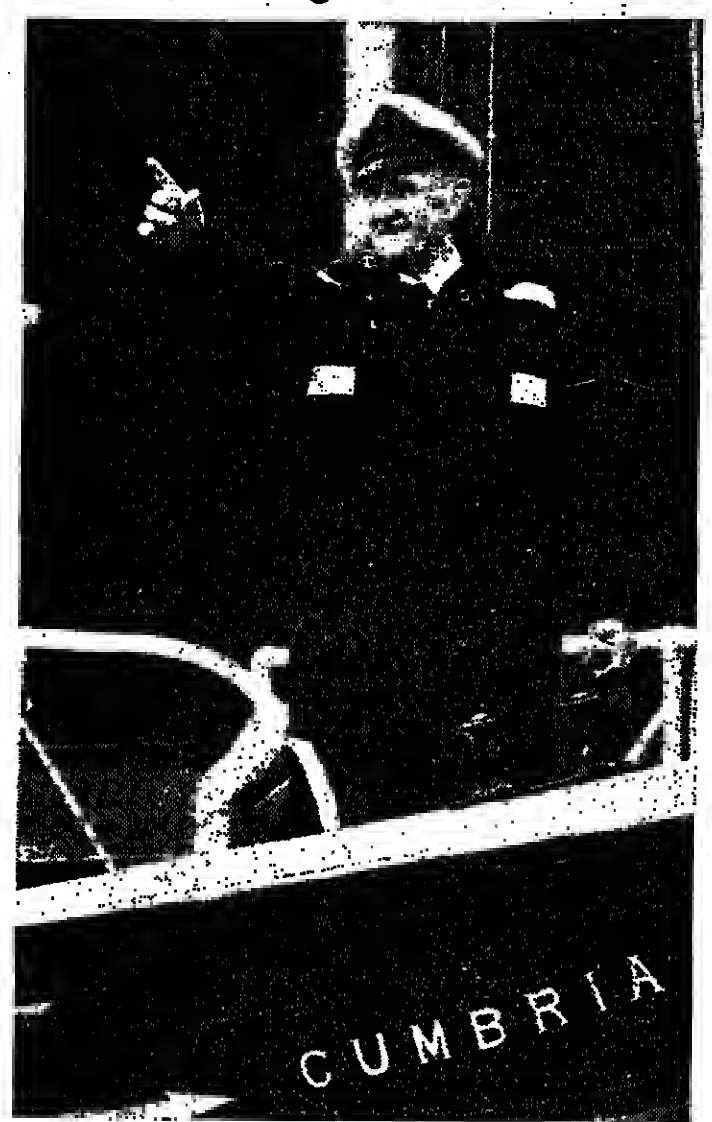
But the pilot is also something of a public relations man for his port. Pilots are self-employed and so it is in their own interest that they should 'sell' their port, should provide a round-the-clock service and make life easier for a ship's master. If they don't, the vessels might dock elsewhere.

Providing that service is not easy in this part of the north-west. 'This is a very difficult coast. There is very little shelter and when the wind is coming from the north-west, sea conditions can be very difficult. If you are boarding a ship you have to judge the moment to jump from the launch on to the rope ladder very carefully. It's no good trying it as the ship is going down into a wave; you have to wait for it to rise.'

'There's no room for second thoughts. You can't come back once you have made your decision. It may sound easy but it's not. We've lost two pilots here in the past 12 years. We never found the body of one of them.'

By law, Workington and Whitehaven must each have a pilot on duty for each of the two high tides every day—and Captain Ditchburn has just two colleagues.

Capt. Jim Meeks, a Geordie, has been with Malcolm Ditchburn for nearly 17 years but Capt. Tony Ireland is a newcomer who arrived from the south coast 20 months ago. Each has a full master's ticket: it's



Capt. Malcolm Ditchburn: He sees hope for the port in liquid sulphur and Windscale nuclear waste

just that they have opted for a shore-based life. The need to cover every tide makes it difficult to get a day off and almost impossible to arrange holidays.

A fourth man would help, of course. But then pilotage charges would go up and ships might decide to go elsewhere.

Although the pilots come under Trinity House's aegis, they earn their income via a complicated formula which takes into account the draft and tonnage of a vessel. All the money goes into a pool out of which Trinity House gets 5 per cent, the men's pension fund 15 per cent, and the pilots share the remaining 80 per cent.

There is also a separate fund, and set of charges, to pay for their vessel. A new launch can cost upwards of £100,000 and it needs a very substantial vessel to operate in the rough waters of the Solway Firth. Their present launch was built on the Clyde in 1959 by Alexander Noble and would cost at least £80,000 to replace.

It is a far cry in Workington today from the boom period of these ports. Once, perhaps a century and a half ago, Whitehaven was the second most important port on the west coast, giving ground only to Bristol. The Cunards and the Brocklebanks started here and it was only when they moved down to Liverpool, where there was space to expand, that the Mersey grew.

Malcolm Ditchburn and his colleagues are aware of the historical importance of their ports and are determined to ensure that the deep waters will continue to attract shipping.

Tomorrow: Waste not, want not in Lytham St. Anne's.



By Anthony Moreton

vessel safely from the pilot launch.

In Whitehaven, for instance, the gap between the north and west piers is 520 feet but the navigation channel narrows to 80 feet in places. From the west pier to the north wall, known as the Devil's Elbow, a vessel has to be manoeuvred through a 252 foot gap. That is Captain Ditchburn's problem.

'You might have to bring a 270 foot vessel through this gap. The way to do it is to

captured a liquid sulphur trade, soon we shall have a roll-on/roll-off service bringing outland waste from Dounreay destined for Windscale, and coal is on its way back. As one door closes another opens in this part of the world.'

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Council houses scheme delayed

By Andrew Taylor

LEGISLATION giving council tenants the right to buy their own homes will not take effect until October 3, Mr. John Stanley, Housing Minister, said yesterday. The legislation was approved by Parliament last week when the Housing Bill received Royal Assent.

Although enforcement of the new legislation is to be delayed until October 3, council tenants seeking to buy their own homes will not lose out, Mr. Stanley said.

'Tenants can be assured that the valuation of their homes will not go up during this period.'

Radio manufacturers fear Carfax deferment

By ELAINE WILLIAMS

BRITISH radio manufacturers are worried that the Government might defer a decision to introduce a nationwide Carfax system, a radio information service for motorists developed by the BBC.

A system of self-financing has been proposed by Radiomobile, one of several UK manufacturers collaborating with the BBC. Radio makers would be responsible for raising the total capital and running costs of the Carfax service. It is hoped that this will allow the system immunity from spending cuts.

Carfax, which gives details of traffic jams, accidents and road works to drivers with a special radio receiver, will cost about £1m a year to run.

So far more than £250,000 has been spent on the project, which is sponsored by the Transport and Road Research Laboratories on behalf of the Department of Transport.

The BBC says the country could save between £5m and £10m a year by reducing the time motorists spend in traffic jams. This would save on fuel costs as well as wages and cut the accident rate.

Radiomobile says it is ready to go into production as soon as a decision is made to implement the full service.

But a rival system developed by Blaupunkt, represented in the UK by Robert Bosch, has been in operation in West Germany for several years. The company says its introduction in the UK will cost only £25,000.

By the end of 1980 the Blaupunkt automatic radio information service—ARI—is scheduled to be installed in Austria, Luxembourg, Switzerland and Spain. According to Bosch, Denmark and Yugoslavia have also decided to adopt ARI.

Either system would add about £10 to the cost of a car radio. Buying an adaptor to existing equipment would cost an extra £20 to £30.

Bosch says that ARI would offer more export opportunities to British manufacturers because it is already internationally accepted. Carfax would have little appeal outside the UK.

Vehicle licence stamps issued

VEHICLE LICENCE stamps went on sale at all post offices yesterday, helping motorists to save for their licences during the year.

The £5 stamps may be used to buy any type of motor vehicle licence at all post offices, and sub-post offices.

The stamps may also be used at any Department of Transport local vehicle licensing office.

A vehicle licence costs £80 for a full year for a private car. The stamps can also be used for shorter-period licences and for heavy goods vehicle, motorcycle and other vehicle licences.

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MANAGEMENT

EDITED BY CHRISTOPHER LORENZ

Canada's rising star dials through to the UK

Jason Crisp reports on Mitel, a fast-growing telecommunications company which is pitching for a key Post Office contract

"BY 1985 I can see us having a turnover of a billion dollars... there is nothing stopping it... it is the perhaps absurdly extravagant boast of a small Canadian telecommunications manufacturer whose sales last year were a scant C\$43.4m."

Much in the same vein, and in keeping with the growth forecast, its irrepressible British founder Terry Matthews is able to boast of a price-earnings ratio of over 40 and claim the shares are greatly undervalued. Well he might— he owns a quarter of the equity. And as if he were trying to ram home his point his company two weeks ago launched a massive \$55m cash bid for an American computer terminal manufacturer.

But for the fact that Mitel's record to date is highly impressive, Matthews' almost Napoleonic attitude to the telecommunications industry would be risible.

Founded in 1973 in Ontario by two Britons, Terry Matthews and Dr. Michael Cowland, both of whom are still only 37, Mitel has had a meteoric growth which is unsurpassed in Canada and comparable only with the more spectacular U.S. semiconductor manufacturers.

Last year's sales of C\$43.4m were double the previous year's which, in turn, were almost twice those of the year before. In the first quarter of this year alone, sales topped C\$20m and Mitel expects figures for the whole year to be between C\$110m and C\$120m.

Despite this growth, however, Mitel has yet to prove it can make the difficult transition from being a fast-growing small company to a fast-growing large one.

Mitel's business is confined to the telecommunications industry which is growing rapidly throughout the world. The lion's share of its sales comes from small private exchanges, which it only introduced in the spring of 1978. This year the company expects to sell 15,000 small private exchanges, which will be more than any other manufacturer in the world although, because they are small, Mitel is not the leader either in value or in the number of exchange lines.

Terry Matthews, a former Post Office research engineer, met Dr. Cowland, a fellow

immigrant to Canada, while working for Microsystems International, part of Bell Canada's manufacturing subsidiary, Northern Telecom. They left in 1973—two years before Microsystems failed—because they were frustrated with its management, and decided to turn a part-time micro-electronics and telecommunications consultancy into a full-time manufacturing operation.

Mitel's first products were sub-systems, designed by Cowland, which were sold to telecommunications manufacturers. A typical example is a "tone to pulse converter" which changes the musical tones you hear when you push the buttons on North American phones into an electronic signal.

In 1976 Mitel bought the manufacturing facilities of a failed semiconductor company, which had been sponsored by the Quebec Government for \$1m. In a matter of months it was operating in profit under the new name of Mitel Semiconductor. It not only makes large scale integrated circuits for its own private exchanges and sub-systems, it also sells its microcircuits to other telecommunications manufacturers in competition with the established giants of the semiconductor business.

Low power

One of the many keys to Mitel's success to date has been a number of technological breakthroughs in its semiconductor manufacturing. The technology it has developed in CMOS (which stands for oxide-isolated, fully recessed, complementary metal oxide semiconductor) is particularly suitable for telecommunications use and gives the company at least a one year lead over the competition, says Matthews.

The advantage of this technology is that the microprocessor is both fast and uses low power consumption.

An impressive array of companies has begun a race to Mitel's headquarters in Ontario seeking to license this technology. Earlier this year the British Post Office and GEC

signed licensing agreements with Mitel. The Post Office will develop micro-circuits using Iso-CMOS, as will Plessey (which is still negotiating a licence), and GEC which will also manufacture the chips.

Indeed, GEC has now re-organised its three main micro-electronics companies into a single division largely based around Mitel's CMOS technology and is concentrating on the manufacture of special custom-built chips—in contrast to its plans for mass production with Fairchild.

Although no one would deny that Mitel has been successful with both its sub-systems and its micro-electronic products it is the small private exchanges which have really powered its very rapid expansion over the past two years.

The first small exchange launched by Mitel was the SX200 which it introduced only in March 1978. It is a small, low cost, electronic exchange with up to 180 extensions. When it was first launched Mitel made 100 units a month; currently it is manufacturing over 500 a month. The biggest breakthrough was when it was approved by the American giant AT&T for use by its own operating companies; in effect AT&T acknowledged that Mitel had come up with a better product than could its own manufacturing arm, Western Electric.

Mitel has followed up the SX200 with a rapid succession of other products. First the SX100, a smaller version of the 200 with up to 100 extensions, then the SX20 with up to 72 extensions.

All three have been particularly successful.

First of all they are relatively low priced. To give an example: the British Post Office has developed its own small electronic private exchange, called the Manarch, to replace the ancient electro-mechanical models it currently offers. It is being manufactured by GEC and Plessey and technically it is a very highly thought of digital exchange that should be available in September this year. The problem is that it is believed to cost, at present, around £400 a line. Mitel's equivalent product is estimated to cost less than £120 a line for the larger sizes.



The lion's share of Mitel's sales comes from small private exchanges. Terry Matthews is holding the SX200 which can have up to 72 extensions.

Another advantage of Mitel exchanges is their size. They are smaller than their competitors. The very latest product is the SX10. Mitel's smallest exchange. With up to 16 lines it is no bigger than a businessman's briefcase, with all the electronics confined to one circuit board. A dozen would be more usual.

Another aspect which the company claims for its exchanges is that, unlike other manufacturers, it offers special features such as abbreviated dialling and "paging" as standard.

Although all this may sound too good to be true even some of Mitel's competitors are given to showing grudging admiration for this upstart Canadian company.

Neither Mitel's position in technology nor its present range of products is much in question—they are good. But there are several big inevitable question marks which hang over the company. Can it continue to finance meteoric growth? Can it actually manage that growth? And will it be vulnerable to counter attacks from its giant competitors as they are stung

into action by Mitel's encroachments? Mitel went public in June last year with a 10 per cent offering which raised C\$10.5m for the company on the Toronto Stock Exchange. At the end of June this year it issued a further 6 per cent of the equity, this time raising C\$17.7m.

Cowland and Matthews between them own 49 per cent of the company. The Canadian Government, which provides financial assistance to Mitel for its development work, has certain restrictions on Matthews' and Cowland's right to sell their shares, principally so that the company cannot fall into foreign hands. Mitel is Canada's only commercial domestic producer of micro-circuits.

The company has a 10-year agreement with the Government under which it will receive up to C\$20.93m which has been allocated to two projects. One is a capital expansion project in which the Government is paying up to half the cost of capital equipment, the second is Government assistance in product development. The Government grants have clearly been crucial for Mitel

in its early stages, particularly as R and D is currently running at over 12 per cent of sales. Last year about 20 per cent of R and D costs were funded by the Government; this year, however, the percentage will decline.

Although much of Mitel's expansion is self-financed—it pays no dividends nor does it intend to do so in the near future—it is clearly going to need further external finance if it is to maintain its ferocious rate of growth. The net margin on sales for the year ending February 29, 1980 was 12.8 per cent—slightly lower than the previous year which reached a record 14.3 per cent.

Last year short term borrowing rose very rapidly from C\$1.7m to C\$10.7m which is over twice the level of long term debt, largely because of a sharp rise in stocks—mainly raw materials—from C\$6.8m to C\$23.3m.

The actual management of an organisation expanding as fast as Mitel can bring major problems—each year getting on for half the staff will have been with the company less than 12 months. At the moment it employs 1,700. It is particularly

important in a high technology, entrepreneurial company like Mitel that the staff are of a high level of competence but are also content to remain with the company.

Matthews, who selects the key personnel himself, sets considerable store on the quality of people and, he says, not surprisingly, very careful in his choices. Not only do they have to be very good technically, but they must have a good attitude.

Interestingly, on the marketing side Mitel recruits engineers who show an ability to communicate well and then train them in marketing.

Mitel keeps each individual operating unit small. At present the largest is the headquarters at Kanata in Ottawa which employs 450 people. It also manufactures at two other sites in Canada, three in the U.S., one in the UK and one in Shannon in Ireland. Matthews are plans to move the rather small assembly operation in the UK to a works in Reading, ten times larger, early next year. This will be its European headquarters.

Oil rigs

Although the U.S. is Mitel's most important market—accounting for almost 75 per cent of sales—the UK has been singled out as a major growth area. At present in the UK Mitel sells private exchanges which are used only as internal networks mainly by Electricity Boards and on North Sea oil rigs. Matthews goes to great lengths to emphasise the strength and potential size of the UK operation.

The UK is attractive to Mitel for a number of reasons. First, it is the third largest telecommunications network in the world and is expanding at 5 to 6 per cent a year. Second, it is eventually to become a more liberalised market as the Post Office will, under proposed legislation, lose its monopoly on the supply of telecommunications equipment which may be attached to the network.

And because British Telecom—as the imminent telecommunications side of the Post Office is now known—will suddenly face the cold winds

of competition, it is hitching itself in a number of ways to this high flying leader in technology.

Not only is the Post Office manufacturing and developing microchips using Mitel's technology for its system, but both the Post Office and Mitel are jointly developing a small private exchange based on the 16 extension SX-10.

The company is also one of the leading contenders in an open tender to supply the Post Office with 1,500 small exchanges. The result should be known shortly.

Mitel's directors are relentlessly optimistic about the future of the company. Not only has it moved down the scale by producing smaller exchanges, it is also planning to introduce a much larger one next year which will take it head-on into competition with some of the biggest and best-known names in telecommunications.

Matthews claims that the SX-2000 which Mitel plans to introduce next year will be a modular constructed digital switched exchange which can range in size from 150 to 35,000 lines. In addition to carrying voice he says it will be suitable for data transmission.

And last month Mitel made a U.S.\$55.5m cash bid financed by its bankers for a New York-based manufacturer of computer terminals, Applied Digital Data Systems. ADDS has 400,000 sq ft of manufacturing space, much of which is not being used. This enormous bid by Mitel's standards, will, if it can digest it, take it into the computer market and eventually the much vaunted office of the future. It is being contested on price grounds alone.

Matthews is not particularly worried about fierce retaliatory competition from the established giants of the telecommunications manufacturers but rather from new small fast growing companies such as Mitel itself.

The confidence of this tight-rope walker knows no bounds. The question of whether it remains justified remains unanswered but British faith in this high flying company will be tested when it is quoted on the London Stock Exchange later this year.

Technical News

EDITED BY ARTHUR BENNETT AND ALAN CANE

COMMUNICATIONS

Office machine has all the answers

THREE OFFICE functions—telephone answering, audio dictation and phone conversation—have been brought together in a compact machine which fits conveniently under the telephone instrument and has been put on the market by Agovox.

Known as the Compur 385 and made by the Carl Zeiss Group in West Germany the unit has a number of useful facilities. For example, there is no need to return to the office to play back the messages received. The machine can be interrogated by using a pocket encoder from any phone instrument anywhere in the world and instructed to play back or, if desired, erase the messages.

Much of the size reduction results from the use of a miniaturised recording device, a move which brings the machine into line with an increasingly popular office standard. Indeed, the machine can be used when the office is occupied, for office dictation—a headset and foot-switch can be supplied.

If the machine is to be left unattended for unusually long periods the machine, which is known as the C385 can be linked to a standard tape recorder; messages on the mini-cassette can be erased in the knowledge that they will be safely kept in the secondary recorder.

Further facilities made possible by the use of a micro-processor to organise the machine's activities, include two-way recording of a conversation, easy logging and location of messages, a message length limiter (the machine can be made to stop recording an incoming caller after one or two minutes), and an answer only facility in which the machine merely delivers a message to the caller without allowing him to record anything.

Rental, which includes on site

service, is at a weekly equivalent rate of between £3.75 and £6.46 depending on the contract. The outright purchase price is £750, with a three-year guarantee and three years' free on-site service.

More from Agovox, 4 Sydenham Road, London SE26 3QY. (01-778 7255.)

Edits full page telex messages

THE ABILITY to edit and perfect long telex messages before transmission is provided by a screen, keyboard and paper tape punch combination put on the market by Volker Graig (UK), Tipton Lane, Watford, Herts WD1 8XL (Watford 40043).

Called Teletaper, the equipment is made by the company's parent in Canada and incorporates full page editing and error correcting facilities. Up to 16 pages of text each containing up to 2,000 characters can be prepared and held ready for transmission (by feeding the tape to the telex transmitter). However, as well as telex code in the punch, the machine can also produce ASCII signals.

A number of the 12 in screen VDUs can be connected to the single punch unit which could be located centrally in a telex room, notifying the VDU users when it is free.

The Teletaper VDU costs £1,200—claimed to be half the price of comparable performance machines—and the Teletaper unit is priced between £1,300 (50 characters per second) and £1,800 for a 75 cps unit. Lease or rental can be arranged.

RESEARCH

Fire test facility

MAJOR CHANGES in the use and interpretation of fire tests have taken place over the past decade, says Rubber and Plastics Research Association of Great Britain (RAPRA), Sharnbrook, Sharnbrook, Salop (0839 250383).

Two key factors are: an increasing demand for full scale tests, and a greater appreciation of the effects of the immediate environment on the progress of a fire; RAPRA is meeting these new requirements by adding an extension to its fire test facility. This effectively converts the existing fire chamber into a 35 cubic metre fume cupboard particularly suitable for larger scale tests. The chamber itself is connected to the existing room/corridor facility and can make use of all existing instrumentation for measuring temperature changes, heat generated, and quantities of smoke and fire gases.

The original RAPRA facility (consisting of a single room and corridor with small instrument room) has been continually developed and now offers several burning chambers and fume cupboards, backed by comprehensive monitoring, analysis, laboratory and test facilities.

Further information from Dr. Keith Paul at RAPRA.

WOODWORKING

Routs and shapes in safety

A ROUTER-MOULDER of modular design, with special features to comply with health and safety legislation, has been introduced by Wadkin, Green Lane, Leicester (0533 789111).

For positive feeding of the timber the machine has both infeed and outfeed beds rolls. A 6,000 rpm belt-driven pre-dressing head planes the under-surface of the work and removes grit before the four high-frequency cutting heads begin to bite. The heads run at 15,000 rpm when cutting and 9,000 rpm when setting up. Tilting slide heads, infinitely variable from 0 to 45 degrees, are designed to minimise noise.

To ensure maximum safety for the operator the work area is completely isolated under a close-fitting binged hood and there is automatic braking on all cutting heads.

The router-moulder is available as a package with the Wadkin Antiformer NX profile grinder; this is fitted with an abrasive wheel to profile the tungsten carbide tipped cutters at the same speed as high-speed steel.

METALWORKING

Jet blade casting advance

WHAT IS described as "a major advance in the casting of high-performance superalloys for aircraft gas turbines" has been announced by the General Electric Company of the U.S.

Made possible by the development of a new ceramic core material, the advance permits the manufacture of hollow, intricately shaped jet engine components, including turbine blades, from oriented eutectic superalloys. These alloys, among the toughest and most heat-resistant ever produced, promise marked gains in efficiency and jet thrust, GE claims.

The new Koraxol core material was specially developed to create highly complex passageways within turbine blades cast from the new alloys. The passageways conduct a flow of compressed air to cool the blades, which are subjected to gas temperatures approaching 3,000 degrees F.

Key to the advance in casting is a process developed at GE's research centre at Schenectady, New York State, for the "selective densification" of alumina as a high-

temperature ceramic. GE claims that this process solves the physical problems that had prevented alumina from being used for cores in casting.

The primary obstacle to be overcome was the chemical insolubility of the ceramic. In its conventional form alumina was found impossible to remove from the internal passages of finished casting. In addition, the material's high density and inflexibility would cause castings to crack internally as the metal cooled, solidified and shrank around the core.

Selective densification solves both these problems, says GE. With this process it is possible to produce intricately shaped alumina cores of porous, honey-comb-like interior structure and a tough, dense outer "skin". The Koraxol core's tough "skin" is claimed to make it impervious to molten alloys while its porous interior prevents it cracking the metal as the turbine blade cools after solidifying.

Koraxol cores are produced by injection-moulding a blend of powdered alumina and a spe-

Straightens saw blades

THE DIFFICULT and time-consuming task of straightening, levelling and tensioning hand-saw blades by hand is claimed to have been largely obviated at Ashton Sawmills, Monmouth, since the company installed a new automatic machine, the Rekamatic, imported from France by C. D. Muninger, Overbury Road, London N15 6RJ (01-806 5435).

With the conventional maintenance methods, using hammers, gauges, and straight edges to flatten the blade back and level it out throughout its length, additional equipment is needed to restore the transverse curvature across the width of the blade to ensure that it

does not wander on the pulleys. The Rekamatic machine, it is claimed, can perform all these maintenance functions automatically with only a semi-skilled operator in charge. Defects cannot pass unnoticed or be over-corrected and the blade is not marked by hammer blows. Once the blade is placed on the machine and the automatic cycle started the operator is free to do other jobs until the cycle is completed.

Two Rekamatic models, RD20 and RD30, are available for blades up to 8 in wide by 17 ft minimum length and 12 in wide by 18 ft minimum length respectively.

Restores the shape

AN automatic process for straightening shafts and cylindrical components which have been distorted by heat treatment has been introduced by the Addison Tool Co., Westfields Road, Acton, London W3 (01-993 1661).

With the Addison SOM 300/A machine the parts to be processed are loaded into an inclined magazine from which they are fed automatically, one at a time, to the straightening platen. The process is claimed to be rapid, quiet and well proven on the Addison

manually-operated machine. It involves no gauging or systematic quality control.

Addison claims that an important advantage of the straightening action employed in the SOM 300 machine is the stress-relieving of the component, which becomes more stable than a part that has been only bend-straightened.

Discharge of the component is also automatic and up to 900 pieces an hour can be processed compared with 650 pieces on a manually-loaded machine, Addison claims.

HAND TOOLS

Aids printed circuit assembly

A CLENCE end cut hand tool for electronics engineers, recently developed by Elite Engineering, Salford Lane, Fareham, Hampshire (0329 231435), will be exhibited for the first time at Interapex in Brighton (October 14-16). The tool, plastic-bodied and therefore light and easy to handle, is designed for use in printed circuit board assembly. It enables the component wires to be simultaneously clenched and cut. This, in one simple operation, both secures the component to the board and cuts the lead to length.

The printed circuit board can then be safely handled before machine soldering without the risk of components falling out or "floating" up. The operation of clenching, or flattening, the wire also cleans it and makes it easier to solder.

ACOUSTICS

Muffles the noise

ACOUSTIC panels which can be made up into enclosures and used by staff as refuges from noise are being offered by Acoustic Treatments, 99 Leigh Road, Eastleigh, Hants (0708 612312).

The pre-fabricated 600mm wide panels are in lengths up to six metres and easily linked together. There is no need for supporting framework.

Erection can be accomplished by unskilled labour, says the company which, however, offers a complete installation service. The panels are easily cut to fit around services, pipe runs, etc. using an oscillating jigsaw.

Electrical services can be concealed within the panel joints and, if necessary, the whole assembly can be demounted and rebuilt elsewhere in a different form.

The panels are maintenance free and easy to clean, with the pvc facing available in a range of colours and textures.

PERIPHERALS

Versatile printer

MADE BY Technical Analysis Corporation of Atlanta and available in the UK from Solitaire Business Systems is a printer which, although it is basically a 300 line per minute unit, has electronics to enable it to print almost any shape or form of character up to 2.8 inches high and 2.0 inches wide.

Known as the PPM (programmable printing machine), the unit can also produce some 21 different bar codes, OCR(A) and OCR(B) characters, vertical lines or print, a wide variety of lines, and reversed (white on black solid rectangle) characters.

A secondary agreement has already been made by Solitaire with Systems 200, the Harlow bureau and systems house, under which the latter will supply the PPM on a dealer basis in all Homeview Level 6 system builders.

Applications will occur in publishing, in pallet or bin labelling in warehouses and in bar coding product identification in

stock control and point of sale.

The facilities of the printer are easily utilised claims the company, and the PPM can be supplied with a variety of interfaces to enable it to be used with most mainframe, mini and micro computers.

Solitaire is aiming the printer at system houses and OEMs wishing to incorporate the device into their products. Prices in the UK start at about £5,500, with typical discounts for multiple orders and OEMs. Outside the UK the printer is supplied through the KPG group.

More from the company at 580, Chiswick High Road, London W4 (01-995 3573).

SOFTWARE

Holiday programs

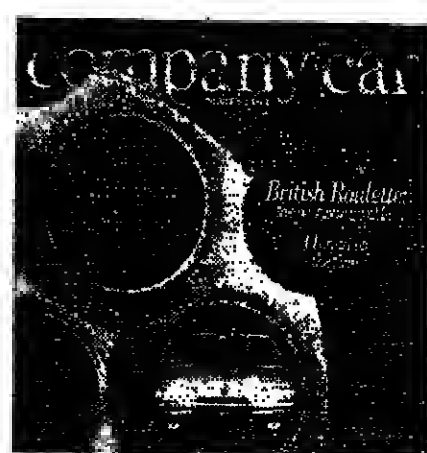
COMPLETE COMPUTER systems for tour operators can now be offered by Datasab, Northgate, 72, Northolt Road, Harrow, Middx HA2 0HE (01 422 3442).

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WORLD-WIDE LANGUAGES

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TDG tops £12m at midway

FOR THE first half of 1980, taxable profits of Transport Development Group, increased to £12.21m, compared with £9.56m last time when results were adversely affected by the 1979 road haulage strike. Overseas subsidiaries made a strong contribution but their impact was diminished by the strong pound.

The directors warn that it would be unrealistic to expect trading conditions to match those of the first six months.

On a CCA basis, pre-tax profits are adjusted to £13.3m (£8.18m).

Warehousing and cold storage services are holding up well to the recession, but a decline in traffic is having an effect on road haulage. First half in the mid belt of Scotland this decline is now spreading to other areas, the directors report.

Turnover for the half year rose from £118.27m to £138.15m and operating profits climbed from £10.13m to £12.8m. A divisional analysis of these shows respectively (with £000s omitted): road haulage £82,518 (£66,959) and £5,821 (£4,779); storage £20,016

HIGHLIGHTS

Lex looks at the Central Government borrowing figures for July which are £800m higher than the comparable period of the previous year and examines their effect on the gilt-edged market. The major company result of the day came from textile group Nottingham Manufacturing, which shows a sharp fall at the trading profit level with margins under severe pressure. Also Pegler-Hattersley has disposed of an associate in the U.S. for £16m and Lex looks at this significant move. The column also considers the second-quarter figures from the U.S. nil groups and finally the DoT's consultative document on disclosure of interests in shares.

£16,882 and £4,895 (£3,845); plant hire and other transport services £10,333 (£10,151) and £897 (£769); reinforcement and exhibitions £25,250 (£20,275) and £1,388 (£734).

Earnings per 25p share improved from a stated 4.55p to 5.56p, while the net interim dividend is held at 1.45p—last year's total payment was 1.25p on record profits of £22.26m.

With SSAP 15 adopted, tax

ments expended from £142,000 to £428,000.

comment

Surprises are rare at Transport Development and yesterday's interim figures were much as expected, leaving the shares unchanged at 76p. The haulage side is flattered by comparison with last year's strike-hit first half and the exhibition business is enjoying a cyclical upturn. But the second half will be extremely difficult. Overseas profits may continue to suffer from the strength of sterling, the storage side will feel the effects of recession and the solidity of the haulage operation is soundly financed and highly competitive, will not fully offset declining volume. With 1981 also likely to be a problem year, the fully-taxed p/e of 94—on profits this year of £22.5m—looks on the steep side. Yet Transport Development has a sound record and a balance sheet of high quality. So a share acquisition, perhaps in the U.S., could lift earnings off their current plateau. Taking the most conservative view, a maintained final dividend would produce a yield of 8.1 per cent.

Nottm. Mfg. profit down

PARTICULARLY difficult trading conditions in the second quarter of 1980 have led to a downturn from £8.05m to £4.05m in the first half pre-tax profits of Nottingham Manufacturing Company. Sales amounted to £72.7m compared with £71.29m. Due to seasonal factors, first half profit and turnover are normally less than those of the second six months and the directors say the group is in a position to take advantage of any improvement in trading conditions. The interim dividend is being maintained at 1p per share—last year's total was 3.75p from pre-tax profits of £18.84m. The group makes knitted underwear, hosiery and tufted carpets.

Murray Caledonian advances

AFTER TAX of £806,089 against £607,581, revenue of Murray Caledonian Investment Trust improved from £27,446 to £10.1m in the year to June 30, 1980.

The dividend is effectively raised from 1.4p to 1.8p net with a final of 1.3p, and at the same time the directors are proposing an interim dividend for the current year of 1p. They anticipate that the final for 1980 will be at least maintained, making a total of 2.3p.

As usual, "B" ordinary shares will attract a scrip issue equivalent in value to the cash dividends. Dividends for the year under review amount to £965,520 (£749,069) and after preference dividends of £36,382 (same) the net balance emerges at £9,088 (£42,004). After the inclusion of £1.23m (£1.15m) brought forward, there is a balance of £12.31m (£12.31m).

Net assets amounted to £11.1m (£37.79m), or 74.2p (66.4p) per share.

Manchester Ship Canal slumps £1.6m half year

PROFITS before tax of the Manchester Ship Canal Company were cut from £1.97m to £356,000 in the six months to June 30, 1980, but the directors are maintaining the interim dividend at 7.5p per £1 share.

Last year, pre-tax profits totalled £1.51m and a total dividend of 15.55p was paid. Pre-tax profits this year were after £205,000 (£9,000) profit on sales of land and investments and £307,000 (£337,000) interest. Tax takes £181,000 (£1,02m) giving earnings per share of 2.5p against 23.4p.

Mr. D. K. Redford, chairman,

says that in the present difficult business climate, the group has not been able to generate the additional revenue needed from the port and associated operations to offset the continued rise in expenditure. "The rate of increase of which was more than twice as fast as the increase in revenue."

The major burdens of higher cost arose from pay, fuel and dredging in the Eastham approach channel. Main charges on ships and cargo will be increased on September 1, the general trading situation remains dull and the Board is doing what

it can to streamline operations.

One of the proposed enterprise zones recently announced by the Government includes land owned by the group in the Manchester docks area. The chairman hopes that these proposals will stimulate interest in developments which should help the group.

As regards current cost accounting it has not been found possible because of difficulties in the appropriate treatment of some of the port assets to issue a supplementary statement with the interim results, the chairman adds.

Warning on sales by Braham

A WARNING that Braham Millar is going to experience an extremely difficult trading year is given by Mr. G. R. Russell, chairman. Sales are unlikely to exceed last year's level and may well suffer some shortfall, he says in his annual review.

In the light of this, the board is organising a reduction in remuneration of production facilities to reflect the lower level of activity.

In the first quarter, export markets have shown some improvement but the home market is very depressed. Although the current overall order is reasonable, difficulties are being experienced in coinciding home market sales, the

chairman adds.

On a more positive note, the chairman says the group is about to commission near Burton-on-Trent, one of the largest sand and gravel processing plants in the U.K.

The foundry at Millars, which made a loss last year due to decreased demand for iron castings, is getting increased orders for spherical graphite castings which is one of the few parts of the ferrous foundry industry where there is increasing demand.

Middle East orders are increasing and the group will again be represented at the Baghdad Fair in October, the chairman states. For the year ended March 31, 1980, group pre-tax profits

slumped from £452,000 to £144,000 on sales of £8.55m compared with £7.84m. The dividend is cut from 1.66p to 0.6p.

As part of the plan to broaden operations, the group undertook during the year the design and manufacture of a specialised chemical plant for producing an additive for animal feed. The plant is operating most satisfactorily, Mr. Russell says.

The group trades as a manufacturer of complete mechanised handling plants for mineral extraction industries, mines and road and alabastro construction. Meeting, Kay Hill, Enfield, Middlesex, September 3 at 3 p.m.

Hallite climbs 49% to £785,000

AGAINST a background of less favourable trading conditions, particularly in the past quarter, pre-tax profits of Hallite Holdings advanced by 49 per cent to £785,044 for the 52 weeks to May 3, 1980, compared with £528,024 for the previous 52 weeks. Sales of this manufacturer of synthetic rubber and plastic precision seals increased 19 per cent to £8.51m.

When reporting first-half profits ahead from £161,055 to £301,875, Mr. R. Harmer, the chairman, said that 1979-80 trading results were expected to exceed those of the previous year. Full-year earnings per 50p share increased sharply from 13.75p to 24.35p and a final dividend of 2.55p lifts the net total by 14.8 per cent to 7.75p, against 6.749p.

Mr. Harmer says that reduced demand in the last six months

felt by many companies in the UK engineering industry using hydraulics and pneumatics is affecting the group's business.

However, the group's involvement in the energy markets of deep coal mining and oil well drilling in addition to further expansion of all international sales, will partly offset this declining order pattern in 1980-81.

Although the considerable uncertainties which face industry make it unwise to give any forecast of 1980-81 results, the chairman says the group has a sound financial base and is well placed to deal with the challenges and opportunities of the next 12 months.

The anticipated increase in exports proved in the event to be only 4 per cent, largely because an improving supply position from group manufacturing companies enabled its

overseas subsidiaries to reduce their stockholdings of UK manufactured products.

Subject to the effects of a worldwide recession, Mr. Harmer expects sales by subsidiaries to increase further in 1980-81 and that this will cause the value of goods exported from the UK to show the significant growth level of previous years.

Tax charge for the year was £225,448 (£212,000) giving net profits up from £315,934 to £560,196. There were extraordinary credits of £248,956 (nil), of which £247,328 represented the surplus resulting from the sale of some 1.5 acres of land and buildings at Hampton.

Dividends absorbed £178,071 (£155,057) leaving a retained surplus of £381,111, compared with £160,847.

At balance date, group shareholdings funds had increased from £3.88m to £4.61m. Total bank borrowings were down to £124,889 (£116m).

Mr. Harmer is in retirement from the Board on October 1 and will be succeeded as chairman by Mr. J. Gordon, who is currently managing director.

Meeting, Sunbury-on-Thames,

September 24, at noon.

comment

Although Hallite has recovered from the dog-days of a year ago, even a 49 per cent increase in profits before tax still leaves the company well short of the record £1.07m made in 1975. Over the years Hallite has been a fluctuating profit record partly because as a supplier of precision seals to original equipment manufacturers it has suffered from the cyclical swings in the engineering industry which tend to be exaggerated by primary producers. In 1979 the company was not only caught by a drop in orders but also suffered stock control difficulties. Since those matters appear to have improved and the group has benefited from more aggressive selling and new products, in the current year the outlook is uncertain, but the company will find it difficult to improve its earnings. One plus point is that the balance sheet has been restored to its former strength following the sale of surplus land at Hampton. At an unchanged 10p the shares yield 10.3 per cent with the dividend covered 4.5 times.

DIVIDENDS ANNOUNCED

Company	Current payment	Date	Corr. dividend	Total dividend	Total last year
Comhen Group	1.2	Oct. 8	1.2	2.55	2.55
Gold Fields Property	1.05	Oct. 3	1.05	6	6
Hallite Holdings	5.55	Oct. 21	4.6	7.75	6.75
Howard Shuttering	1.5	Oct. 13	1.5	18.4	18.4
Manchester Ship	1.5	Dec. 1	1.5	3.75	3.75
Notts. Mfg.	1.0	Oct. 1	1.1	1.5	1.5
Property Sec. Inv. Trst.	1.3	Oct. 1	1.3	1.6	1.6
Transport Devt.	1.45	Nov. 7	1.45	4.25	4.25

Dividends shown pence per share net except where otherwise stated. *Equivalent after allowing for scrip issue. †On capital increased by rights and/or acquisition issues. ‡South African cents.

Rexmore LIMITED

	1980	1979
Turnover	£'000 39,849	£'000 38,177
Income before interest and exceptional items	2,056	1,797
Interest	(1,021)	(438)
Exceptional items	(143)	—
Income before taxation	892	1,359
Taxation	(57)	49
Income before minority interest	835	1,408
Minority interest	(6)	(7)
Income before extraordinary items	829	1,401
Extraordinary items	(287)	(227)
Net income for the year	542	1,174
Dividends	501	427
Earnings per share	8.14p	13.75p

Manufacturers and Distributors to the Furniture Industry, Furnishing Stores and Household Textiles.

T. Cowie subsidiary development

Eastern Tractors, recently acquired by T. Cowie, has announced plans for the continuation and further development of its trading activities in East Anglia.

Rationalisation will take place, but it is intended that the sales and service of agricultural, industrial, and horticultural equipment will be maintained and improved where necessary.

Extensive discussions have already taken place with Massey-Ferguson, for whose products Eastern Tractors are main distributors to the region.

Eastern Tractors was acquired when Cowie took over George Ewer, after a protracted bid battle. The enlarged Cowie group will have an annual turnover of £100m and net assets approaching £20m.

MURRAY WESTERN

Pre-tax revenue for Murray Western Investment Trust rose to £1.55m as against £1.23m. Tax took £820,848 compared with £581,451.

At half time net asset value was 10.5p up at 87.6p. Net total dividend is held at 2.1p by a final of 1.6p. Earnings per share were better at 2.25p (2.17p).

Guthrie to manage £20m Liberian plantation project

GUTHRIE International Plantation Services, the Kuala Lumpur-based plantation consultancy arm of the Guthrie Corporation, has won a major international contract to manage the 18,000-acre Decoris oil palm plantation project in Liberia.

The project will cost more than £20m, and is sponsored by the Liberian Government. Finance is being provided by the Commonwealth Development Corporation, the World Bank, the African Development Bank and from local sources.

Guthrie has major plantation holdings in the Far East and

wide experience in plantation development and management in many countries. In the Decoris project—the latest in a number of agricultural projects with which the Guthrie company is associated in West Africa—Guthrie will also provide technical advisory services to 1,000 smallholder families in the area.

Guthrie Roper Berhad, Guthrie's publicly quoted Malaysian subsidiary, yesterday signed an agreement with Negeri Sembilan Development Corporation (NSDC) to establish a joint venture to develop a 5,000-acre rubber plantation in the district of Kuala Pilah.

The joint venture company to be known as NSDC-Guthrie Plantation SDN. BHD. will have an authorised capital of M\$12.5m (£2.5m). NSDC will hold 60 per cent, and Guthrie Roper 40 per cent.

For the NSDC, the agreement was signed by Dato Rals Yatim, chief minister of Negeri Sembilan.

Guthrie controls 75,000 acres of plantations in Negeri Sembilan and the project reaffirms the company's confidence in the long-term future of natural rubber in Malaysia.

Stroud Riley confident of recovery

PROVIDED THINGS do not get worse in the general state of the economy of the UK and of the Western world, Mr. R. V. Stroud, the chairman of Stroud Riley Drummond is convinced that the textiles group will go forward to better things.

For the year ended March 31, 1980, a pre-tax loss of £82,000 was incurred against profits of £406,000 previously—as reported July 25. No final dividend is being paid leaving the year's payout at 0.5p (11.5p) net per share.

Mr. Stroud says in his annual statement that the restructuring

of the group's UK textile interests has meant significant changes in management and also a considerable number of staff redundancies, particularly in James Drummond and Sons. That company, along with the rest of the group, is now slimmed down in order to be able effectively to take its share of the very much smaller market available to the industry.

Redundancy and reorganisation costs in the 1979-80 year totalled £202,000, less tax relief. Compensation of £10,000 was paid to a former director for loss of office.

DRAYTON PREMIER

Following purchases of 300,000 shares, National Coal Board Pension Funds now holds 5.12m shares in Drayton Premier Investment Trust—20.14 per cent.

Meeting, Biogley, September 5, 11 am.

The Nottingham Manufacturing Company, Limited

INTERIM RESULTS FOR THE SIX MONTHS ENDED 30TH JUNE 1980

	6 months 1980	6 months 1979	Year 1979
Sales	8000	8000	8000
72,770	71,286	163,411	
Profit on Trading	2,255	4,795	14,277
Investment Income	2,114	1,583	3,214
	4,369	6,378	17,491
Less: Interest on 6½% Convertible Unsecured Loan Stock 1983/98	314	328	655
Profit before Taxation	4,055	6,050	16,836
Profit after Taxation (see note)	2,839	4,235	11,795

Note: Taxation has been charged in respect of the first half of 1980 at the estimated rate chargeable for the year.

The second quarter of 1980 has seen trading conditions which have been particularly difficult and the period is comparable with one which reflected the sharp rise in retail sales prior to the increase in Value Added Tax in June 1979.

Turnover and profit for the first six months of the year are normally, due to seasonal factors, less than those of the second six months. The Group is in a position to take advantage of any improvement in trading conditions.

The Directors have declared an Interim Dividend of 1p per share, costing £699,000, to be paid on 1st December 1980 (the Interim Dividend for 1979 was 1p per share).

11th August, 1980

RESULTS AND ACCOUNTS IN BRIEF

BURY SHULTON HOLDINGS (numbered materials, etc.)—Results for year to March 31, 1980, already reported with prospects for current year. Capital reserves, £1.82m (same). Retained profits, £0.65m (£1.54m). Stocks, £10.6m (£9.38m). Creditors, bills payable, accrued charges and provisions, £5.49m (£5.06m). Indebtedness to banks, £5.49m (£4.96m). Members, 28,770 (28,770). Leasehold property, 11,224m (£14.65m). Stock and work in progress, £14.2m (£2.6m). Bank overdrafts, £781,000 (£242,000). Meeting, Winton, Winton, September 4 at noon.

DURA MILL—Dividend 3p (same).

LYNCH HOLDINGS (property investment and development)—Results for year to March 31, 1980, already reported with prospects for current year. Long- and medium-term loans, £14.05m (£12.05m). Bank loans and overdrafts, £12.24m (£12.45m). Capital reserves, £22.02m (£20.16m). Revenue account, £2.35m (£2.03m). Meeting, 12 Nelson's Arms Works, Market Street, W. September 1 at noon.

STOCK OVERSHEEN AND INVESTMENT TRUST—Results for year to March 31, 1980, with scrip issue already reported. Investments, £12.75m (£12.05m). Shareholdings (funds), £34.62m (£30.35m) including capital reserves, £10.6m (£8.71m) and revenue reserves, £17.7m (£14.18m). Directors confident that current year will be successful. Equity Trust holds 23.54 per cent of capital. Meeting, Cele Royal, W. September 8 at noon.

SYLTONE (engineer and wholesaler electrical distributor)—Results for year to March 31, 1980, already known. Shareholdings (funds £4.2m (£3.76m)). Bank overdrafts £1.62m (£0.78m), loans £22,400 (£350,000), bank balances and cash £177,719 (£99,851). Pre-tax profits of £1.84m (£1.43m) adjusted to £1.31m (£1.14m) on CCA basis. Meeting, Post House Hotel, Bramhope, near Leeds, September 3, at 2.30 pm.

SPAIN

August B Price

Barco Bilbao 226

Barco Central 248

Barco Exterior 210

Barco Interior 210

Barco Ind. Cal. 120

Barco Madrid 141

Barco Santander 276

Barco Valencia 138

Barco Vizcaya 138

Barco Zaragoza 214 +1

Oragades 97 +2

Oragades Z 62

Fecsa 62

Gel. Pinedas 23.5

Guadalupe 67.2 +0.2

Guadalupe 67.2 +0.2

THE TECHNOLOGY INVESTMENT TRUST LIMITED

Financial Statement for Year to 31st May

Revenue before Tax 1980 £1,353,272 1979 £1,022,792

Earnings per Ordinary Share 4.83p 3.18p

Dividend per Ordinary Share 4.46p 3.10p

Cost of Dividend £579,703 £511,453

Net Asset Value per Share 138p 154p

* Includes special non-recurring dividend of 0.36p

Value of investments £27,297,519

U.K. 64.9% North America 29.5% Others 5.6%

Manager

INVESTMENT TRUST SERVICES LIMITED

7/28 Lovat Lane London EC3R 8ES Telephone 01-421 1212

M. J. H. Nightingale & Co. Limited

17/28 Lovat Lane London EC3R 8ES Telephone 01-421 1212

1979-80

High Low Company Price

59 53 Airsprung 53

50 22 Airsprung 22

150 22 Airsprung 22

100 78 County Cars 10.7% P. 78

101 63 Ditcher Ord. 122

125 63 Frank Nersis 122

129 73 Frederick Park 122

150 82 George Blair 122

84 48 Jackson Group 122

153 103 James Burgess 122

302 242 Robert Jenkins 122

232 176 Torday 221

32 74 Twicken 15% ULS 117

90 70 Twicken 15% ULS 117

56 28 Unilock Holdings 47

90 45 Unilock Holdings New 48

29 42 Walter Alexander 48

242 126 W. Yeats 242

U.K. 64.9% North America 29.5% Others 5.6%

* Accounts prepared under provisions of SSAP 15.

BIDS AND DEALS

McEvoy sale makes £16.5m for Pegler

BY RAY MAUGHAN

Pegler-Hattersley, one of the largest manufacturers of valves in the UK, has agreed with its partner, Rockwell International, to sell the jointly owned McEvoy Oilfield Equipment Operations to Smith International of Newport, California, for an expected consideration of about \$80m.

The sale of its 49 per cent holding in McEvoy is worth about £16.5m to Pegler at current exchange rates and compares with Pegler's market capitalisation of £35.5m at 122p, up 6p yesterday. Net worth of Pegler in the March balance sheet was almost £80m.

The transaction, which Pegler and Rockwell expect to complete in October, will be conditional, inter alia, on the receipt of

appropriate consents or clearances from regulatory authorities in the UK and the U.S.

Pegler's involvement in McEvoy stems from its acquisition of Newman Hender in 1969 when the latter topped an offer from Serck. It is perhaps indicative of the ties which periodically link the major steel valve manufacturers in the UK, and the U.S., that at about the same time Serck was cutting its agreements with Rockwell in lubricated plug valve manufacture, Rockwell came back to Serck recently with a down raid which gave it 23.9 per cent of the Serck equity and had been planning an outright bid worth £33m before the U.S. Justice Department intervened to block

the agreed offer. As a subsidiary of Pegler, Newman Hender produced McEvoy equipment under licence from Rockwell for five more years until, on the expiry of the licence agreement, Pegler acquired a 49 per cent interest in McEvoy, which is based in and around Houston, Texas, in exchange for a 51 per cent holding in Gloucestershire-based McEvoy activities in the UK.

McEvoy manufactures well-head equipment for the oil industry and employs around 1,100 employees, around 500 in Gloucestershire.

McEvoy had been a success story for Pegler until, about three years ago, its contribution to profits peaked at over £4m

pre-tax. The oil equipment market has since been hit by intense competition which has slashed margins. McEvoy, moreover, has recently lost its important market in Iran and has had to bear the cost of extensive sub-sea well head research and development. Its contribution to Pegler's profits, finance director Mr. R. M. Inman, said yesterday, had slumped to under £1.5m pre-tax in the year to March last although trading is apparently on a recovery path.

Mr. Inman acknowledged the long-term growth prospects inherent in oilfield valves but said that Smith, a major Californian supplier of oilfield equipment with no previous

involvement in the valve industry, had approached Rockwell which, in turn, relayed the approach to its junior partner.

"It was not something we set out to do," the finance director pointed out, "but the decision made itself." It is not difficult to understand why. Smith is apparently willing to take Pegler's interest out at almost 20 times fully taxed historic earnings—a ratio which may be the norm in the Californian energy industry but looks overwhelmingly favourable to a UK industrialist. Pegler was rated at just over four times historic earnings last week and the rumour of its business is now trading on a p/e of about 31.

Pegler will be publishing a

Class One circular to set out the details of the disposal in due course but has no immediate plans to redeploy its cash proceeds. It is clear that Smith's approach took Pegler by surprise but the need to reinvest may become pressing. With an already healthy balance-sheet, Pegler's cash-filled coffers, its low market rating and difficult prospects may presage an unwelcome bid. It would be ironic if Rockwell's expansionary ambitions in Europe and knowledge of the valve industry lead it to approach Pegler now that its plans for Serck have been put aside. As Smith said in a recent annual report "nothing happens until somebody sells something."

Lex, Back Page

Selection Trust holders prefer BP cash to shares

British Petroleum has won control of Selection Trust, the mining finance house, but the majority of Selection Trust's shareholders have elected to take cash for their shares rather than BP paper.

Yesterday BP announced that its bid had been accepted by shareholders representing 91.7 per cent of Selection Trust's shares. Just over 60 per cent, however, had been handed in for cash before the cash offer closed last Friday.

At that time BP's share offer—19 shares for every five Selection Trust—valued, each Selection Trust share at £12.88, a very small premium over the cash offer of £12.75 a share despite a 10p rise in BP's share price on the day.

At that price, BP has had to

pay £246.1m in cash for its planned diversification into minerals. The share offer remains open indefinitely.

WINCHMORE TRUST
The Stock Exchange listing of Winchmore Investment Trust has been cancelled. Applications to make specific bargains under rule 163 (2) may be submitted.

CULTER GUARD
Industrial Equity (Pacific) Hong Kong is interested in 470,000 shares of Culter Guard Bridge Holdings, amounting to 62.9 per cent.

MALLOWS OFFER
BP's offer for David Malloys and Co. is now unconditional.

Witan Investment lifts stake in William Collins

Witan Investment has increased its shareholding in William Collins and Sons (Holdings), the Glasgow publishing group which announced a turnaround from a profit of £3.35m to a loss of £255,000 for 1979, earlier this year.

Witan announced yesterday that it had bought a further 119,000 ordinary shares taking

its holdings up to 328,000 shares—equal to 7.96 per cent of the voting capital.

Mr. Raymond Cazalet, managing director of Witan, said that the shares were purchased on recovery prospects for the group and there was a possibility that the holding might be added to at a later date.

EMI selling scanner line in U.S.

BY DAVID LASCELLES IN NEW YORK

EMI Medical Inc., the UK company's U.S. affiliate, is negotiating to sell its scanner 6000 product line to Omnimedical, a small Los Angeles company which manufactures diagnostic equipment.

EMI is in the process of extracting itself from the CAT scanner business. An earlier attempt to sell its U.S. CAT scanner business to GE of the U.S. had to be modified because of anti-trust problems. However, the assets and operations involved in the deal with Omnimedical are separate from the GE deal.

Mr. Gary Mounik, chairman of Omnimedical, said yesterday that no definitive agreement had been reached, and he would not discuss the kind of price involved.

He said Omnimedical already makes head CAT scanners, and that the 6000 body scanner would complement the company's product.

BRITISH INDS. AND GENERAL

Hoare Govett has purchased 600,000 deferred 25p shares in British Industries and General Investment Trust on behalf of a wide range of clients for long-term investment purposes. The shares have been acquired from London and Manchester Assurance Company.

Three investment trust companies to which Drayton Montagu Portfolio Management acts as investment managers, intend in the immediate future to sell 600,000 deferred shares of British Industries and General Investment Trust to Hoare Govett clients.

The trusts are Drayton

Premier Investment Trust, Drayton Consolidated Trust and Drayton Commercial Investment Company.

Mr. Richard Granville, a director of Hoare Govett, will be invited to join the BIGIT Board.

Fosco's offer for Unicorn is unconditional

Fosco Minerals' offer for Unicorn Industries has become unconditional and will remain open until further notice following the passing of a resolution at an extraordinary meeting to reorganise Unicorn's share capital.

Fosco has received acceptance from holders of 26,477,472 Unicorn ordinary shares, amounting to 92.41 per cent, of which holders of 23,372,675 have elected for the ordinary consideration. Immediately prior to the announcement of the offer, a subsidiary of Fosco held 600,000 Unicorn shares, or 2.05 per cent.

Fosco intends to acquire the outstanding shares compulsorily.

ASSOCIATES DEALS

Arthur Guinness Son and Co.—A trust of which Lord Iveagh, director, is a trustee has acquired 25,000 shares for £22,648. He has no beneficial interest in these shares.

LRC International—Mr. D. H. S. Howard, director, has sold 50,000 shares at 35p from non-beneficial account.

C. H. Bailey—C. H. Bailey, director, on July 24 disposed of

72,266 shares and on July 26 sold 70,000 shares. These shares were held as a trustee.

British Land—Rowe and Pitman, associates, has bought for an associate of British Land, 20,000 Corn Exchange shares at 50p.

Murray Clydesdale Investment Trust—As a result of purchase of 100,000 shares, National Coal Board Superannuation Scheme and the Mineworkers' Pension Scheme jointly hold 5,258 shares (6 per cent).

Midland News Association—In a recent transaction Claverley Company, parent of Midland News Association, bought 4,500 6.6 per cent preference shares at 60p per share. The Board states that Claverley is prepared to acquire any other holdings at the same price during the next two weeks.

Tex Abrasives policy

HAVING DIVERSIFIED sufficiently to hold its own to a reasonable extent in almost any circumstances, Tex Abrasives, the industrial abrasives products group, is taking all available steps to diversify even further in the various markets which have not been attacked previously. Mr. L. Evelyn-Jones, the chairman, tells members in his annual statement.

The industrial dispute in the steel industry is still having an effect and the chairman says it would seem that there is little or no demand for furniture—the furniture industry is one of the largest users of abrasives.

For the year ended March 31,

the same price during the next two weeks.

SHARE STAKES

Butterfield Harvey-Britannic Assurance Company has acquired 50,000 ordinary, making holding 1,48m (10.24 per cent).

Warren Plantation Holdings—Plantation and General Investments (a company in which Mr. R. P. Legg exercises over a third of the voting power) has sold 60,000 shares, leaving holding 440,000 shares (2 per cent).

Great Northern Investment Trust—Pearl Assurance has acquired a further 150,000 shares, increasing holding to 5.67 per cent.

R. and W. Hawthorn, Leslie and Co.—N. P. List, director, has disposed of 89,000 shares.

At balance date, shareholders' funds were up from £1.75m to £1.83m. Bank overdrafts were lower at £467,075 (£678,212) and there were no secured loans, against loans of £5,570 last time.

Mr. Evelyn-Jones is to relinquish the post of chief executive to Mr. Brian Carter, the deputy chairman and managing director, but will remain as chairman.

Meeting, Colchester, September 4, at noon.

GOLD FIELDS GROUP GOLD FIELDS PROPERTY COMPANY LIMITED

(Incorporated in the Republic of South Africa)

PRELIMINARY ANNOUNCEMENT OF RESULTS

The unaudited consolidated profit for the year ended 30 June 1980 is as follows:

	Year ended 30 June 1980 R000	Year ended 30 June 1979 R000
REVENUE		
Rentals	1,962	1,534
Waste rock sales	276	264
Gold royalties	175	263
Profit on property and township sales	582	298
Profit on sale of investments	3	47
Income from investments	636	204
Interest	221	302
Sundry	281	235
	4,136	3,147

EXPENDITURE	1,499	1,612
Administration, property and general expenses	1,118	1,157
Interest paid	381	450
Amount written off investments	—	5

Profit before taxation and extraordinary item	2,637	1,535
Taxation	692	542
	1,945	993
Add: Extraordinary item	—	2,997

Profit after taxation and extraordinary item	1,945	3,990
Less: Dividend covered	1,922	4,530
Net movement to reserves	223	(540)
Dividend declared	1,922	4,530

Retained	23	(540)
Earnings per share—cents	19.0	9.7
Dividend per share—cents	10.0	6.0
Times dividend covered	1.9	1.6
Net asset value per share—at directors' valuation—cents	289	237

NOTES
1. The extraordinary item referred to above is the profit on the sale of the Luipaards Vlei mining title.
2. Since the year end the Company has disposed of its subsidiary Achilone Mansions (Proprietary) Limited.

These results are published in advance of the annual report which will be posted to members in September 1980.

DECLARATION OF DIVIDEND

Dividend No. 119 of 10.0 cents per share in respect of the year ended 30 June 1980 has been declared in South African currency, payable to members registered at the close of business on 29 August 1980.

Warrants will be posted on or about 2 October 1980.

Conditions relating to the payment of the dividend are obtainable at the share transfer offices and the London Office of the Company.

Requests for payment of the dividend in South African currency by members on the United Kingdom register must be received by the Company on or before 29 August 1980 in accordance with the abovementioned Conditions.

The register of members will be closed from 30 August to 5 September 1980, inclusive.

LONDON OFFICE:
49 Moorgate
London EC2R 6BQ

UNITED KINGDOM REGISTRARS:
Close Registrars Limited
803 High Road
Leyton
London E10 7AA
11 August 1980

By order of the board

C. E. WENNER
London Secretary

Racal.

A powerful international force in world electronics.

The Company has just completed another record year—its 25th in succession. It was without doubt one of the most significant and exciting in our history; a year in which we were engaged in a fiercely contested take-over battle which resulted in our successful acquisition of Decca Limited.

The profit before taxation for the year ended March 31st, 1980 amounted to £63,624,000 (previous year £61,623,000) an increase of 3.25%. Taxation is estimated to be £21,997,000 (previous year £23,131,000).

Sales amounted to £263,742,000 (previous year £226,689,000) an increase of 16.35%.

Although both sales and profits were the highest in the Company's history, they were adversely affected by—

1. The recession in world trade which delayed the receipt of a number of large orders from certain overseas customers in the areas of tactical radio and communications security.
2. The strength of sterling which—(a) affected our competitiveness and therefore reduced our profit margins, and (b) had a marked impact on the translation of the earnings of our overseas companies, especially those in the United States where they are now substantial.
3. The national engineering strike which occurred earlier in the year and which had a material effect on the performance of one of our companies.

The Directors are recommending the payment of a final dividend of 12.3p net of tax (3.075p per share) making a total of 16.5p for the year (1979 15%).

Decca Limited

This is by far the largest and the most exciting acquisition yet made by Racal and was completed on April 1st, 1980 at a total cost of £106,000,000.

It was most gratifying and indeed a sign of considerable confidence in the future of the enlarged Group that the Decca shareholders to whom the offer was made elected to take Racal shares rather than the cash alternative in respect of

The Trading Record for the Last Ten Years

	Turnover £	Sales Outside UK £	Pre-Tax Profit £	EPS after Tax
1971	17,168,000	11,556,000	2,229,000	.76p
1972	21,024,000	13,392,000	3,165,000	1.10p
1973	25,718,000	14,994,000	4,273,000	1.36p
1974	37,378,000	25,099,000	6,247,000	1.70p
1975	53,988,000	36,912,000	9,559,000	3.82p
1976	79,971,000	58,073,000	19,646,000	6.16p
1977	122,258,000	90,273,000	32,714,000	9.44p
1978	183,338,000	141,380,000	49,832,000	12.73p
1979	226,689,000	169,201,000	61,623,000	16.88p
1980	263,742,000	185,611,000	63,624,000	18.06p

83.2% of the ordinary shares and 91.8% of the 'A' ordinary shares.

Under the guidance and inspiration of the late Sir Edward Lewis, Decca has grown into one of the United Kingdom's leading electronics companies, with a fine international reputation especially in radar, navigational aids and marine survey.

Decca's advanced technology in areas of professional electronics is well recognised and when combined with the considerable resources of Racal, including its strong and successful management, will create a powerful base for the development and for profits growth of the enlarged Racal Group.

During the year ended March 31st, 1980, sales of Decca capital goods totalled £124,000,000.

Our Business

It is that of professional electronics and prior to the acquisition of Decca, Racal was engaged in two main areas, namely—

1. Data Communications

Racal is now the second largest manufacturer of modems in the world, after American Telephone and Telegraph

of the United States. The Group has also developed a major position in associated systems including multiplex and network diagnostic and control equipment. It sells to computer users throughout the world and has entered the terminal business with its 400 and 4000 series.

Data communication companies had an outstanding year and increased sales by 41% to an all time high of £102,000,000, equal to 39% of the Group's total. They are now the largest contributor to Racal sales and profits.

2. Radio Communications

Racal is a world leader in this field supplying equipment for long range fixed and transportable use (strategic), short range mobile and man-portable operation (tactical), and for monitoring, intercept and jamming applications in both these roles.

In the tactical radio area there were delays in the placing of certain large orders by a number of overseas countries. However the order rate for this type of equipment has increased substantially since the beginning of 1980 and the current year should show a distinct improvement in the fortunes of this division.

On the other hand it was a good year for the companies engaged in the sale of strategic communication equipment and they produced the highest profit figures in their history. Electronic warfare has developed very much in the past year and will be a major contributor to the Group's profit in this and succeeding years.

Sales of radio communications equipment again exceeded £100,000,000 and represented 38% of sales.

Other Activities

These account for the remaining 23% of total sales and include electro-acoustics, electronic instrumentation, communications security, computer-aided design, automatic and diagnostic test systems, magnetic recording, microwave components, infra red and radar intruder detection devices and health and safety.

Racal-Decca

This newly formed group covering marine radar and navigation systems, airborne navigation systems, electronic warfare in the radar field and marine survey, will be a third major activity and of a similar size to the other two.

Research and Development

The high level of technology employed in Racal's research and development programmes represents an essential, continuing investment in the future of the Group. Of the 17,000 people employed in professional electronics, over 13% are wholly engaged in this work, including a sizeable proportion in overseas companies.

The technology of the silicon chip is undoubtedly revolutionising our industry. In the Racal Group we are concentrating a very significant effort on the application of microprocessors, as well as custom-designed and standard large-scale integrated circuits, to improve the performance, reliability and cost-effectiveness of our new products. We are intent upon dispelling the air of black magic surrounding these devices and making their design and their operating software, a routine development task.

At Racalex 79 we staged a comprehensive show of our latest equipment. Of these, 45 individual designs incorporated microprocessors. Two of the most advanced units, the JAGUAR-V tactical radio, which demonstrated Racal's anti-jamming techniques publicly for the first time, and the MEROD high-speed data system, were based on our own micro-circuits.

Appreciation

Racal was placed first in the British Business Growth League published in the June issue of the magazine 'Management Today'. This lists the 200 largest UK quoted companies in order of the gross return to shareholders over the past 10 years. During that time the value of the Racal ordinary share increased by over 2000%.

Such a magnificent performance has been made possible by the outstanding dedication of the Racal team; a team which year after year competes with and succeeds against the leading electronics companies of the world. Their contribution not only to the Company, but also to the wealth of the United Kingdom deserves the highest praise. I wish to thank each and every one of them for the great contribution made to

our success and to extend thanks also to their families for their constant support and understanding.

The Future

The very high rate of inflation in the United Kingdom continues to increase our costs at a higher level than that of our major international competitors. This, and the continued strength of sterling, is affecting our profit margins. Additionally the strength of sterling has a marked impact on the translation of the earnings of our overseas companies, especially those in the United States which are now substantial.

We are experiencing a world trade recession, but because of the spread of our sales amongst so many countries and of the businesses in which we are engaged, we believe that the effect on Racal will be less than that on others. We are, however, watching closely the trend in the United States where our commercial and industrial sales are large.

The biggest task confronting us is at Racal-Decca where everyone is working extremely hard to restore this company to its former greatness. On the capital goods side we have not discovered any problems that we did not expect, but the fact remains that recent years have shown a marked deterioration in the performance of Decca.

However the company has been given new leadership, contains a host of good people and is full of excellent technology. Although it will not contribute to this current year's profits, 1981/82 will see Racal-Decca going forward strongly.

Our order book is again at a record level, our many new products are being well received, and provided that there is no worsening of the problems to which I have referred, and subject only to circumstances beyond our control, we can look forward to another record year, our 26th in succession.

Ernest T. Harrison

Ernest T. Harrison OBE FCA Comp IEE,
Chairman and Managing Director,
Racal Electronics Limited.

RACAL The Electronics Group Winners of twenty three Queen's Awards.

Racal Electronics Limited, Bracknell, Berkshire.

UK COMPANY NEWS

Ruston and Hornsby advances

Ruston and Hornsby, the engine manufacturer, raised pre-tax profits to £22,606,000 against £20,894,000 for the year ending March 31, 1980.

Turnover for the GEC subsidiary was £87,463,000 (£72,460,000).

LONDON TRUST

Following the recent conversion of London Trust's convertible loan stock 1985/87 £106,880 remains outstanding. The board is to exercise its rights under the trust deed to give remaining stockholders three months notice of intention to require them to convert the whole of their stock into ordinary shares.

Comben shows halftime rise

IMPROVED margins and an increased contribution from overseas developments have lifted taxable profits of Comben Group, estate developer and house builder, to £2.81m in the six months to June 30, 1980, compared with £2.3m. Turnover fell slightly from £23.94m to £23.25m.

The current volume of sale activity in the UK is lower than last year, say the directors, but they are encouraged by the fact that mortgages are now readily available. When the inevitable reduction in interest rates occurs, they add, purchasers' confidence should be restored.

Six months' tax takes £350,000 (£800,000), leaving the attributable surplus up at £2.46m (£1.7m), of which the maintained interim dividend of 1.2p again absorbs £488,000. Last year, a total of 2.55p was paid from

BOARD MEETINGS	
The following companies have notified dates of Board meetings to the Stock Exchange. Such meetings are usually held for the purpose of considering dividends. Official indications are not available as to whether dividends are in the form of cash or shares. Figures shown below are based mainly on last year's timetable.	
Interim	Final
Comben Group	Aug. 13
English & Scottish Investments	Aug. 13
Noble and Lund	Aug. 13
Ocean Transport and Trading	Aug. 13
Penland Industries	Aug. 13
Smith and Nephew	Aug. 13
Squirrel Horn	Aug. 13
Ultramar	Aug. 13
TODAY	
Interim: Commercial Union Assurance, Mercantile Investment Trust, Unilever	
Final: Abwood Machine Tools, W. and J. Gossop, Group Investors, Lestrans, Rogell	

pre-tax profits of £5m. Comben is an associate of Hawker Siddeley Group subsidiary, Carlton Industries.

With a land bank of around 8,500 plots supported by a Comben can afford to take a

moderate level of gearing, cautious approach. Turnover has slipped in the first half but margins have improved by 24 percentage points because cash flow has been helped by a low level of spending on new land and by the inclusion of £0.5m of high-margin overseas profits.

PSIT ahead £0.5m and plans scrip

FROM gross income of £4.66m against £3.74m, pre-tax surplus of Property Security Investment Trust jumped by £905,000 to £585,000 in the year to March 31, 1980.

The dividend is stepped up from 1.6p to 1.8p net with a final of 1.3p and the directors are planning a one-for-four scrip issue.

The surplus is struck after interest of £3.54m (£3.15m) and expenses of £255,000 (£202,000), but before tax of £340,000 (£188,000), minorities credit of £225,000 (£151,000) and an extraordinary credit of £938,000 (£24,000).

The group's main activities are property investment and dealing and share dealing.

Golden Grove's latest assays

BY KENNETH MARSTON, MINING EDITOR

IS GOLDEN GROVE again going to be a name to conjure with in Australian mining circles? It is not another gold prospect, as its name implies, and it is not new. It is a copper-zinc and some 225 kilometres east of Geraldton in Western Australia and it excited a good deal of interest in 1974 when it was being examined by EZ Industries under a farm-out deal with America's Amstar.

Golden Grove has come back into the news again with the report that further significant copper and zinc mineralisation has been found in the area, this time at the Scuddles prospect some 4 kilometres north of the original discovery at Gossan Hill which showed some 15.5m tonnes of ore containing a relatively high grade of 3.59 per cent copper.

EZ says that drilling of 18 holes at Scuddles has given results ranging up to an ore width (thickness) of as much as

27.4 metres assaying 2.4 per cent copper and 11.9 metres grading 3.1 per cent. In a separate zone to the west EZ has hit a width of 6 metres grading a high 25.5 per cent zinc with 2.4 per cent lead and 221 grammes per tonne silver.

Two other holes gave values of: 10 metres grading 18.8 per cent zinc, 1.7 per cent lead and 150 grammes silver; 28.8 metres running 12.5 per cent zinc, 0.8 per cent lead and 82 grammes silver. EZ adds that Esso Australia is continuing drilling to define the limits of the higher grade copper and zinc mineralisation.

To estimate the size of the deposit, Esso, EZ and Amstar each have a 31.16 per cent stake in Golden Grove with the remaining 6.5 per cent held by Aztec Exploration. It is believed that Aztec is a subsidiary of Golden Grove, the shares of which were last quoted in London at around 24p.

Nchanga Consolidated Copper Mines Limited

Statement by the Chairman the Hon. J.C. Mapoma, M.P., Minister of Mines.

(Incorporated in the Republic of Zambia)

The last 12 months have been marked, at the international level, by grave political tensions, uncertainties in the world financial system, more increases in oil prices and an unprecedented rise in the price of precious metals. On the domestic front, on the other hand, there were two very encouraging and significant developments. In the first place, the Republic of Zambia made important progress in the implementation of the International Monetary Fund programme negotiated in 1978. As a result of this, the country achieved some economic recovery, even if this was modest. Secondly, it is my pleasure to announce that the Company's financial position improved further during the 1979/80 financial year and that, consequently, the Company made a profit before tax of K131.2 million compared to K26.0 million for the previous financial year. The higher profitability was attained because of the higher prices of copper on the London Metal Exchange and the increased contribution of the cobalt. Therefore, the good financial results can only be received with cautious optimism since finished production for the year reflects a drop for the third year running.

Operating Results

Finished copper production for the year ended 31st March, 1980 was 359,516 tonnes, compared to 363,332 tonnes for the previous financial year, and was 9,820 tonnes below the forecast of 369,836 tonnes.

The reduced production resulted from the effects of reduced expenditure for maintenance of mine plant and operating equipment, on account of the low copper prices during the five-year period to the end of 1978. In addition, the Company continued to suffer from the loss of skilled personnel.

CHINGOLA DIVISION

Chingola Division's tonnage of ore delivered to the mills and the overall grade of ore were only slightly down on the previous financial year's figures due to reduced output from the underground and lower grades of ore mined from the Nchanga Open Pit (NOP). Detailed exploration drilling carried out underground in the eastern section of the mine over the last two years has indicated that the mineralisation in the Lower Orebody thins out earlier than expected and, in some areas, barren zones were delineated. In order to enable the Company to maintain optimum mill feed grades, it will be necessary for it to carefully control production from the remaining reserves from the rich Lower Orebody and to balance this with the mining of lower grade ores from other areas.

Critical shortages of spares for open pit vehicles resulted in overhauled stripping being some nine million bank cubic metres below the programmed 28 million bcm.

There was some improvement in the supply of spares towards the end of the year and, consequently, vehicle availabilities were better. In addition, new vehicles were introduced into the fleet, together with locally reconditioned trucks, with the aim of accelerating stripping operations and ore production. The Company attaches paramount importance to the improvement in the availability of open pit equipment because Chingola Division's operations will become the key to the Company's successful production efforts over the next few years.

The new Chingola "B" open pit was in full production with better than forecast copper ore tonnages and grades being achieved. The rehabilitation of the West Mill continued and, in the last quarter of the year, better results were obtained from this plant.

Production from the Tailings Leach Plant was higher than forecast despite the fact that the reclamation of old tailings was constrained by acid shortages.

ROKANA DIVISION

Underground ore production levels were maintained and the average grade of ore delivered was slightly higher. Ore production from the open pits was lower due to significantly reduced equipment availabilities at the Mindola Open Pit, where the shortage of spares and skilled maintenance personnel was particularly severe. This pit, as a source of ore to the oxide concentrator, is nearing exhaustion. However, recent surveys indicate that reserves of ore suitable for treatment in the Torco Plant will be available for several years.

At the smelter, only three reverberatory furnaces were in operation at the beginning of the financial year because of shortages of coal which arose during the previous financial year. This, coupled with an acute shortage of refractory bricks, which delayed furnace overhauls, resulted in a build up of high grade concentrates.

The first unit of the refinery tankhouse to be rehabilitated came back on stream early in June, 1980. Rehabilitation work on the "B" unit will, therefore, commence shortly.

KONKOLA DIVISION

Ore production from both shafts at Konkola Division was slightly better during the year under review. However, development was affected, as at the other Divisions, by serious shortages of spares for mining equipment.

The future of Konkola Division will depend very heavily on the Company being able to provide, at an early stage, adequate pumping facilities which will lead to a steady lowering of water levels in the main aquifer. Your Company is confident that, when the two new pump stations on the 3240 level at No. 1 shaft and at the 1940 level at No. 3 shaft are complete and commissioned and full scale dewatering becomes possible, a slow but steady improvement in production will be possible from the Division. But it is unlikely that these improvements will be achieved for at least five years.

Concentrator operations were satisfactory but a lower copper recovery was achieved due to higher acid soluble grades in the ore received.

Operations at Kansanshi were satisfactory, with an improved mining rate being achieved and a greater tonnage being treated at the Chingola concentrator this year.

BROKEN HILL DIVISION

This Division had a poor year. Down-time in the Waelz Kiln plant and in the Imperial Smelting Furnace Plant (ISF) was appreciably higher than last year. Concentrate grades to the kilns were lower because readily recoverable stocks of mixed fines tailings were exhausted and there were more numerous stoppages for repairs to kiln refractory brickwork. At the ISF Plant, the depletion of coke stocks in May, further failures in the recuperator blast air preheater and failures of condenser refractories resulted in a number of extended furnace outages.

Acid supplies to Broken Hill from Rokana Division had to be reduced during the last quarter of the year, with a consequent reduction in the production of Sable 2 Zinc.

At the Nampundwe mine, work continued on the improvement of shaft and plant facilities in readiness for the planned increases in pyrite concentrate production to meet the requirements of new acid plants.

In summary, therefore, it has been another difficult year with various shortages hampering production at all Divisions and maintenance work being affected by the continuing shortfall in the number of skilled and experienced personnel.

Major Projects

COBALT

Last year, I reported on the existence of zones of cobalt enrichment both underground and below NOP current workings at Chingola and the Company's plans for cobalt production from these sources. I am pleased to say that scheduled progress on drilling, development and on plant construction was achieved.

A detailed exploratory programme in the NOP was completed and the results confirmed the tonnage and grade of treatable cobalt reserves previously indicated. The planned future NOP mining plan was, therefore, revised to permit the extraction of this material at an even rate. Production from this source will commence in 1983. The first block of cobalt-rich ore in the underground mine was caved and production from this source started on schedule in January, 1980.

The new cobalt section of the Konkola concentrator was successfully commissioned in December, 1979. Subsequent trial milling and flotation tests were satisfactory.

During initial development below the 2200 level at No. 1 Shaft at Konkola, a zone of cobalt mineralisation was discovered. It is too early for a definite assessment of potential reserves to be made but plant scale trials on segregated development ore have confirmed that satisfactory recoveries to a concentrate suitable for treatment in the Rokana refinery can be achieved. Plans for the exploitation of this resource provide for the stockpiling of concentrates ahead of the commissioning of the RLE plant.

Progress on the construction of the new plant at Rokana, under the supervision of Zambia Engineering Services Limited, was satisfactory. Piling has now been virtually completed. In addition, the civil engineering programme is on schedule and the major erection contracts are being let. Some items of capital equipment ordered from overseas have already arrived on site. There is, therefore, every indication that the original target completion date of February, 1982 will be either met or improved upon.

Satisfactory progress is also being maintained on the modifications being made to the existing cobalt plant at the same Division.

ACID

Production of sulphuric acid at Rokana, the only acid producer in Zambia, is dependent upon the quantity of sulphur contained in matte going to the converters and on the efficiency of the three existing acid plants. Throughput and availability were lower and acid production fell from a peak of over 300,000 tonnes per annum to approximately 250,000 tonnes per annum. Despite this, the Company maintained full supplies of acid, totalling approximately 300,000 tonnes per annum, to all the other Zambian consumers. This left the Company about 220,000 tonnes of acid for its own use compared with its present requirements of some 270,000 tonnes. The shortfall has, inevitably, limited copper and zinc production.

The decision has been taken, therefore, to construct a fourth acid plant, with a nominal capacity of 100,000 tonnes per annum, at Rokana, at a cost of some K35 million. The primary feed to the plant will be the cobalt roaster and smelter gases and pyrite, heavy rains in Tanzania, and also suffered further disruption in the movement of exports and imports during the second half of the year as a result of the damage caused to bridges in Zambia.

I am, however, happy to report that, despite these setbacks, metal stocks at mine were maintained at acceptable levels, chiefly due to the availability of the southern route and the commendable efforts made by the Zambia Tanzania Road Services (ZTRS). Unfortunately, the volume of imports through Dar es Salaam was higher than TAZARA and ZTRS were able to move. Consequently, serious congestion developed at the port.

TAILINGS LEACH STAGE III

During the year, fresh studies were undertaken to bring an earlier evaluation of the Tailings Leach Stage III project up to date, with the aim of starting production at an early date. It may be possible to incorporate certain additional improvements into the plant.

Transport

Both rail and road transport faced serious problems during the year under review. The worst affected was the Tanzania Zambia Railway (TAZARA). It experienced a hiatus wash-away, due to heavy rains in Tanzania, and also suffered further disruption in the movement of exports and imports during the second half of the year as a result of the damage caused to bridges in Zambia.

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Metal Markets

Despite fears of a recession and an apparent slowdown in the industrial activity in the major copper consuming countries, Western World consumption of refined copper remained strong throughout 1979 and grew by 5.8 per cent to 7,672,000 tonnes over the 1978 level. Refined copper production, on the other hand, rose by about 3.5 per cent to 7,654,000 tonnes. The resulting net supply deficit of approximately 800,000 tonnes was nearly double the 1978 shortfall of 370,000 tonnes and was largely responsible for the reduction in world copper stocks from 1,529,000 tonnes, at the end of the 1978/79 financial year, to an estimated 1,310,000 tonnes at the end of the last financial year. The bulk of the reduction occurred in the London Metal Exchange (LME) warehouse stocks. Since the end of the financial year, stocks have remained fairly constant.

In the final quarter of 1979, there was a dramatic upsurge in the prices of gold and silver which provided a strong speculative influence on base metal markets. International political uncertainties and a general distrust of paper currencies reinforced this boom. Consequently, copper prices rose and peaked at £1,375 (£2,412) per tonne on 11th February, 1980. However, the boom in precious metals proved to be short-lived and so copper prices slumped to \$841 (£1,672) per tonne by 31st March, 1980. Nevertheless, copper prices during the financial year under review improved to an average cash settlement price of \$991 (£1,705) per tonne compared to \$837 (£1,308) per tonne for the previous financial year.

The producers' reaction to the higher copper prices in 1979 was swift so that many of the mines, which were closed during the 1974-1978 recession, were reopened. In addition, the increase in secondary copper output further augmented the world copper supplies. Consequently, the 1979 supply deficit in the world copper market gradually moved into a small surplus situation. Most forecasters are now predicting an overall surplus of 200,000 tonnes for 1980.

As I write, the Western world is moving into a recession. Regrettably, most industrialised nations have responded by adopting restrictive monetary, fiscal and exchange rate policies which will, inevitably, serve to dampen the growth in consumer spending and investment. Under these circumstances, prospects for the next year and probably the next are not encouraging.

This contribution will be roughly maintained in the second half with the Portuguese earnings overtaking those from France.

Over the medium term, Texas is clearly a prospective money-spinner. Within the UK, the group is insulated from the most severe depression in house prices by its emphasis on more expensive homes (the average unit price is £31,000) and by its recently introduced mortgage insurance scheme. In this context, the maintained dividend covered five times on the estimated tax charge — looks parsimonious. Comben should at least maintain last year's pre-tax figure of £5m which, on a full tax charge, produces a realistic p/e of about 5½ at yesterday's price of 34p. The yield is 11.1 per cent on a maintained final, though shareholders will have reason to expect a little more.

This is regrettable because of the serious effects which previous slumps have had, particularly on developing countries. I am sorry that the agreement reached in February, 1979 in Geneva on the U.S.\$750 million fund aimed at stabilising the prices of various commodities and materials, including copper, has not produced any tangible results. On the contrary, there has been a serious divergence of views between the copper producing and consuming nations at the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development meetings held since the accord I referred to last year.

In view of the uncertainties about world economic prospects for the future, the need for negotiations and an understanding between producers and consumers is more important now than ever. It is my sincere hope that some fruitful discussions will be possible soon and that positive action will be taken to ensure stable copper prices.

Demand for cobalt remained strong up to the middle of 1979. However, due to high interest rates and the recession in the major consuming countries, a decline set in towards the end of that year in almost all sectors except the high temperature alloys.

In order to instil confidence in consumers, the two major cobalt producers agreed, in January, 1980, that the price of U.S.\$29 per lb. would be maintained until the end of the year.

The overall rising profit trend experienced last year continued during the year under review. As a result, the average realisation price for copper was K1,680 per tonne compared to K1,159 per tonne for the previous year.

The accounts for the year yielded a profit before taxation of K131.2 million. There was a charge of K75 million for taxation which left an after tax profit of K56.2 million.

Since the taxation recoverable in previous years has now been absorbed, normal tax payments by the company will commence during 1980.

As a direct consequence of the further improvement in the company's finances, it became possible to partially relax the restrictions, which your Management imposed a few years ago, on capital expenditure. Accordingly, K63.2 million was spent. The cobalt project financing was completed in December, 1979 and I am pleased to report that progress on the project is well under way.

In spite of its improved liquidity in Kwacha terms, the Company is still experiencing difficulty in obtaining foreign exchange for the purchase of necessary spares and equipment.

Outstanding loans were reduced by K24 million to K229 million by 31st March, 1980.

The past few years have been characterised by rising inflation, which has adversely affected companies such as yours. Your Management, I am sure, will have undertaken a study of this phenomenon with a view to finding appropriate measures for the continued viability of the company.

I am happy to report that, for the first time since November, 1974, your Company has been able to pay a dividend of K9,300,000 to the "A" and "B" shareholders. In order to strengthen the financial position of the Company, an amount of K46.9 million has been appropriated to general reserve. This retention was decided upon in the light of the Company's higher capital expenditure over the financial year under review, its future programme of capital expenditure and the increased working capital requirements due to the continuing inflation.

Personnel

I am happy to report that the Company's excellent record in industrial relations was maintained. I wish to take this opportunity, therefore, to thank the Mine Workers' Union of Zambia for its good leadership and all the workers for their co-operation which have contributed to the industrial peace enjoyed by the Company.

I hope the substantial improvements made by the Company to the supplementary retirement and resignation gratuity scheme for its local employees and to the conditions of service for expatriate general payroll employees will lead to improved morale and efficiency in the Company.

The pace of training Zambians continues although the Company is still experiencing shortages of trained personnel to spearhead the Company's efforts in many fields.

Since the year end, Mr. M. W. Stephenson, Technical Director of the Company since January, 1976, has ceased to be seconded to the Company. In thanking him for his contribution to the Company, I wish Mr. Stephenson and his family every success for the future.

Mr. T. A. D. Moskwa, who has been with the Company for 30 years, has succeeded Mr. Stephenson as Technical Director. Considering the challenging times your Company is facing, Mr. Moskwa has a difficult task ahead of him and I am sure that you will join me in wishing him every success in his new task. I also welcome the appointment of Mr. J. Pope as Consulting Engineer of the Company. In his new post, Mr. Pope, who has spent the past 28 years in our industry, will work very closely with Mr. Moskwa at the head of our Technical team.

Directorate

Mr. J. A. Holmes has succeeded Mr. M. W. Stephenson as a "B" Director on the Board of the Company. Mr. Holmes is no newcomer to the Company, having served the Company as Chief Consulting Metallurgist before he left in October, 1974. I welcome his return.

Future Prospects

The economic outlook for the short-term is full of uncertainties due to the economic recession. Unfortunately, measures which have been adopted to cure the ills in the world economy may not be effective in the short-term. However, I believe that in the longer-term, an upturn in industrial activity can be foreseen.

I am pleased to report that the attainment of independence in Zimbabwe will give the Company more flexibility in the routing of its cargo. Furthermore, with the cessation of political tensions, following the ending of the liberation war, Zambia has an opportunity to enjoy relative peace and concentrate on its economic development. In this connection, it is worth noting that the introduction of the Third National Development Plan almost coincided with the normalisation of the situation in Zimbabwe.

As far as your Company is concerned, I see us contributing significantly to the success of the Plan, for the copper mining industry is still the mainstay of the Zambian economy. It is, therefore, important that the mining industry operates efficiently and maintains the highest possible level of profitability to enable it to contribute funds which the Government can use for the development of agriculture and related industries.

Last year, I cautioned against any premature relaxation of the harsh discipline to which we had subjected ourselves over the previous few years and which had enabled your Company to survive the recent hardships. As I write, the price of copper has fallen quite dramatically from the high levels it attained early this year. I cannot foretell what the future price of copper is going to be. Consequently, strict discipline and efficiency must continue.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank employees at all levels for their contribution over the past year. I am confident that, with their loyalty and dedication, we shall continue to improve our position in the future despite the difficulties which may lie ahead of us.

Australian move to promote Ranger deal

THE AUSTRALIAN Government plans to amend the Atomic Energy Act to help clear the way for potential Swiss, German and Japanese interests to join in the development of the Ranger uranium deposits in the Northern Territory, reports James Fort from Sydney. It would also clear the way for the Government to sell its existing 50 per cent stake in Ranger.

As already announced, Peko-Wallsend and EZ Industries, which own 50 per cent of Ranger, propose to form a new company, Energy Resources of Australia, which would acquire the Government stake and then introduce foreign participants with about 15 per cent to be offered to Australian public investors.

ERA was expected to be floated early this year but has run into a number of delays. The proposed amendments could further delay the float and possibly upset the schedule to start production of about 3,000 tonnes of uranium oxide a year by 1982 rising eventually to 6,000 tonnes a year.

The Atomic Energy Act at present specifies that the Government may authorise other parties to carry on operations at Ranger on behalf of or in association with the Commonwealth.

Some of the overseas partners queried whether ERA could strictly be interpreted as acting on behalf of the Commonwealth once the Government sold its interest, and refused to commit themselves without an amendment.

The Government has agreed and plans to pass the amendments through the Labour opposition, which is against uranium mining until it is certain about safeguards.

A Federal Election is due by the end of the year and the Government is anxious to push the amendments through before then. Failure to do so could further delay the Ranger project by several months.

How the Canadian brokers see it

WHILE so much of the UK mining investment interest seems to be concentrated on the Australians, it is worth bearing in mind that Canada also has much to offer.

Among the latest comments from the stockbroking firms there, MacDougall, MacDougall and MacTier take a hopeful view of the longer term North American economic prospects and feel that the recession there could begin to moderate in the third quarter.

At the same time, they do not look for any strong recovery next year, but with the possibility of U.S. tax cuts they expect continuing inflation. Because of this they rate gold mining shares as prime investments. They also have a view that mining shares generally will advance strongly in the 1980s and look for buying opportunities in the next three months.

Their recommendations include: Noranda, Inco, Teck, Placer Development, Hudson Bay Mining and Smelting, Campbell Red Lake and Pampour.

OIL AND GAS NEWS

Warrior finds oil-gas in the U.S.

BY STEPHEN THOMPSON

Warrior Resources and Double Eagle Energy and Resources, two Canadian-based oil exploration companies, have discovered oil and gas in the first of their nine separate exploration prospects in Oklahoma in the U.S.

The discovery was made at the Gill No. 1 well in Seminole County where production testing of two separate zones resulted in commercial hydrocarbon production from both.

Gill No. 1 was drilled to a total depth of 4,395 feet and casing set to 3,505 feet.

A 24-hour test of the interval between 3,380 and 3,366 feet in the lower Cromwell zone produced dry gas at a stabilised rate of 2.5m cubic feet a day, while a 24 hour test of the upper Cromwell zone between 3,271 and 3,275 feet produced 37 degree gravity oil at a rate of 340 barrels a day and gas at a rate of 1.75m cubic feet a day.

A third upper zone, the Gilcrease, appears from logs, drill cuttings and drill stem tests to be oil productive, but was not produced in this well as the Gill No. 1 will be placed on production from the upper Cromwell zone.

Oil and gas contracts are now being negotiated and development drilling is underway.

Warrior and Double Eagle, together with their partner, Simasko Production, hold around 340 acres surrounding the discovery area and are acquiring drilling rights in the area which should result in five or more development wells.

A second exploratory well, Klutts No. 1, located 22 miles north west of Gill No. 1 is drilling below 4,000 feet and testing should commence within the next few days.

Shares of Warrior and Double Eagle, which are both registered in Vancouver, British Columbia, are traded in London under rule 163(1)(c).

Reynolds Diversified Corporation, a U.S. registered natural resources company with extensive interests in Australia and the U.S., has entered into an agreement with Australia's Northland Minerals to secure an 80 per cent interest in oil and gas concession to the Emirate of Ajman. The Emirate of Ajman is part of the Union of Arab Emirates.

The deal is subject to the approval of the Government of the emirate. Under the terms of the agreement Reynolds will pay US\$10,000 to the Government of Ajman and undertake to complete a geophysical survey at Reynolds' cost within six months. Reynolds expects the cost of the surveys to come out at approximately US\$800,000.

At the end of the survey period Reynolds may elect to commence an exploration programme and must inform the Government of Ajman accordingly and sign and execute a contract with the Government.

If Reynolds is ahead with the programme it may earn a further 15 per cent interest in the concession by completing a two well programme and meeting terms and conditions in any contract with the Ajman Government.

The concession is located 12 miles south of the Muskeg field which has a rated capacity of 50,000 barrels of oil a day and has been producing since 1974.

SAMURAI BONDS

South Korea to raise Y10bn

BY RICHARD C. HANSON IN TOKYO

THE GOVERNMENT-BANK OF SOUTH KOREA (KDB) will have no trouble tapping the Tokyo yen bond market as a borrower in October, despite economic and political uncertainties in South Korea.

The KDB is planning to issue Y10bn (\$44m) in 10-year bonds aimed at bolstering the country's balance of payments position. This is its second Samurai bond following a Y10bn issue in January, 1978. Ironically, there were probably more questions raised before the first issue than the second, partly because of the strong impression among underwriters that the authorities are anxious to maintain economic ties with South Korea on an even keel. Japan, for example, has made

other gestures recently to correct the trade imbalance which runs heavily in its favour.

The Koreans have two factors in their favour in coming to the Samurai market. First, they have built up within the Japanese financial community very close ties. Second, the Japanese investor traditionally is not troubled very much about any risk that may be involved concerning bond issues in Tokyo. This accounts for the very small differences between terms made available to the best Samurai bond issuers and countries with distinctly lower ratings.

"There has not been a bond default (in Japan) since the war, so investors do not even think about the possibility,"

explains one banker.

The KDB issue in fact will come soon after bonds planned in September by the highly rated World Bank and the European Investment Bank and around the same time as a bond by EDF, the French national electricity utility.

Meanwhile, speculation has arisen that the Ministry of Finance will ease its general ban in force since the end of last year on yen loan syndications to overseas borrowers. Yen syndications were restricted at the same time as foreign currency participations. The latter were restarted in April in a rather modified way.

The authorities tightened controls on overseas yen lending as the country's balance of

payments turned heavily into the red last year. The deficits have eased, however, in recent months, partly as a result of a strong inflow of capital into Japanese securities since April. Depending on who one talks with in the private sector, there is the feeling that the Government could ease up as early as the end of September, or the present sense of caution should continue through the end of the year.

The official in charge of the Short-term Capital Division of the finance ministry would comment only that they are aware that the situation has improved since the ban was put into effect, but that no decisions have been taken so far to ease the restrictions.

Financial plan rumours boost Fiat shares

By Rupert Cornwell in Rome

FIAT SHARES rose yesterday on the Milan bourse by almost 8 per cent following the weekend reports that a major financial reorganisation is planned for the troubled car subsidiary of Italy's biggest private industrial group.

The rise yesterday to L1,699.5 per share from L1,577 is in a sense a continuation of the upward movement in Fiat stock since the news on July 31 that Sig. Umberto Agnelli was stepping down as Fiat group managing director.

The market's enthusiasm does not appear to have been tempered by the disclaimer issued by Banca Nazionale del Lavoro, one of the banks cited as handling the operation, that it knew nothing of any such project.

In fact the bank's reaction, and its suggestion that no such scheme was necessary given Fiat's existing facilities still outstanding with its bankers, may even have encouraged speculators further, as a sign that the Turin group's financial position was less dramatic than is sometimes painted here.

The reports in the Milan daily Corriere della Sera, said that plans were at an advanced stage for a L1,000bn (\$1.2bn) operation for Fiat's car division. The scheme would be in addition to government help for Fiat under the special lire 1,500bn fund approved by the Senate this weekend.

Sharp profit fall at Heineken

BY CHARLES BATCHELOR IN AMSTERDAM

HEINEKEN, the Dutch beer, spirits, and soft drinks group, experienced a sharp fall in net profit in the first six months of 1980 and profits for the year as a whole will be lower.

The exceptionally bad weather in most of Europe has led to a decline in beer sales, the company says, in a statement issued in advance of the six months figures which are due on September 5.

Beer shipments to the U.S., where Heineken is the largest imported brand, also fell. This was not the result of Americans drinking less beer but of distributors cutting back on stocks.

Inflation and price controls

prevented Heineken from passing on increased costs in higher sales prices.

The management board expects an improvement in the company's result in the second half of the year but this will not prevent a decline on last year's net profit.

In March, Heineken forecast that profits would continue at a satisfactory level with the international spread of its activities allowing setbacks in one area to be offset by improvements elsewhere.

The company is changing its accounting year to a calendar year. In the 15-month period to the end of 1979, Heineken

reported consolidated net profit of Fl 143.6m (\$74m) on sales of Fl 3,490m.

Unilever Indonesia, will offer 15 per cent of its net assets on the Indonesian Stock Exchange next year to help finance a \$100m expansion programme.

Board chairman Mr. Yamani Hassan told Reuters the sale of shares on the exchange will provide about \$25m of the total needed to add a new factory in Surabaya, rebuild the Jakarta factory, and possibly add another Jakarta factory at a later date. The expansion programme would bring Unilever's total capital investment in Indonesia to about \$175m.

Talks on A\$1.2bn coke plant project

BY JAMES FORTH IN SYDNEY

A CONSORTIUM of Australian and overseas companies, led by Lend Lease Corporation, is investigating the possibility of establishing an A\$1.2bn (US\$1.4bn) coke plant at Gladstone, on the Queensland coast.

Mr. John Bjelke-Petersen, the state premier, said yesterday that the first stage of the plant could be producing coke and other by-products from Queensland coal by 1984, and that the plant was the likely forerunner of a major steel mill in Queensland.

Gladstone is a growing industrial port and already sup-

ports the world's largest alumina refinery, operated by Queensland Alumina. Plans have been announced for two major aluminium smelters to be built at Gladstone, one by Alcan of Canada and another by a consortium which has been investigating the coking plant for more than two years. Lend Lease is a major construction, engineering and property group, which has been studying diversification into energy developments.

The other members of the consortium are the Queensland gas distributor, Allgas Energy;

Austrian steelmaker Voest Alpine; chemical manufacturer, Monsanto Australia; international coke marketer, Hansen Neuberger; and the coal mining, coke and chemical producing company, Charbonnages de France.

Mr. Bjelke-Petersen said the Queensland government had offered help by assisting the consortium to secure adequate long-term coal supplies. The proposal was for an integrated coke manufacturing plant, constructed in four stages starting in mid-1981 and scheduled for completion in 1989.

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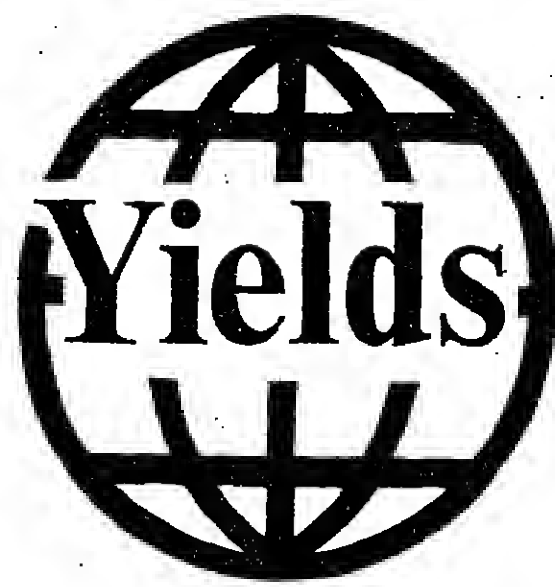
FINANCIAL TIMES

Eurobond Quotations and Yields

AIBD

THE ASSOCIATION OF INTERNATIONAL BOND DEALERS

AT 31st JULY 1980



Eurobonds in July

BY FRANCIS GHILES

The Association of International Bond Dealers (AIBD) compiles current market quotations and yields for Eurobond issues. These quotations and yields are published monthly by the Financial Times. The Association's prices and yields are compiled from market-makers on the last working day of each month. There is no single stock exchange for Eurobonds in the usually recognised sense—secondary market trading business is done on the telephone between dealers scattered across the world's major financial centres. Membership of the AIBD (which was established in 1969) comprises over 550 institutions from about 30 countries.

DEMAND for new dollar denominated Eurobonds slumped last month while hard currency bonds continued to ride high. In the Deutsche Mark sector a record volume of new issues—over DM 2bn—was successfully placed. What happened last month to the dollar sector was that the weight of a heavy new issue calendar coincided with the bottoming-out of dollar interest

rates. But many issuing houses continued to bring new issues to the market on terms which anticipated a further fall in dollar interest rates. The result was that demand for new dollar paper dried up and some houses were left with uncomfortably large positions. Many issuing houses may have been able to forestall large losses by positively fuelling this overhang as Chemical

Bank's Review of international capital markets points out. But this has been done under the assumption that interest rates will move lower, making these unrealistically priced issues more attractive in several months' time. For the time being things are moving in the wrong direction: many issues launched in July are standing at hefty discounts in the secondary

market and, even at these low levels, few buyers are showing interest. Among the major casualties are the 10 1/2 per cent bond to 1990 for Nova Scotia, which was standing early in August at 91 1/2-92 1/2, the 11 1/2 per cent bond to 1988 for Republic Steel which was standing at 90 1/2-91 and the 10 1/2 per cent bond to 1990 for British Oxygen which was standing at 88 1/2-89 1/2. One issue which performed markedly better than others was the \$50m tap issue for Oesterreichische Kootrollbank. It offered a coupon of 10 per cent for five years and was priced at a more realistic 98 1/2 per cent to yield 10.40 per cent. This was consistent with this borrower's policy of trying to ensure that all its issues trade at a reasonable level in the secondary market.

By the end of July, \$8.7bn worth of new dollar Eurobond issues had found their way into the market. Of this total, \$2.8bn were issued in June but the issuing price slowed to \$65m in July. By early August only a trickle of dollar issues, most of them convertibles and floating rate note issues, were finding their way into the market. One sector which appears to be flourishing is that for con-

vertibles. Paribas (Suisse) and Metropolitan Estates Property Company were among the more notable names last month. By early August the rise in U.S. dollar interest rates was seriously shaking the tree. Prices were marked down regularly in the second half of the month while investors continued the buying strike they had initiated late in June. Holidays have also played a part in keeping things very quiet. While the dollar sector was suffering the pain of unsold paper, the D-Mark sector and Swiss Franc sector were doing very well. So was the guilders sector.

By far the most dramatic figures were those relating to foreign D-Mark bonds: over DM 2bn worth of such paper was sold between the last week of June and the end of July. Even so, in early August the German Capital Markets Subcommittee was able to schedule a calendar of new issues amounting to over DM 1bn, the highest issue scheduled—though not completed—since last January. Most issues were well received and the limelight fell particularly on the World Bank, because one third of a DM 700m public issue it arranged

through Deutsche Bank was placed directly with the Saudi Arabian Monetary Agency. This is the first time SAMA has bought such a large proportion of a publicly quoted D-Mark foreign bond. Some observers felt that the move signalled SAMA's willingness to play a more significant role in the market. The only issues which met with a poor reception in this sector were those for less than prime quality names: Iberduero, of Spain, and Cible are good examples and they underline the fact that investors make a sharp distinction between bonds for different quality borrowers. While their appetite for prime names in D-Marks remain very strong, they are not prepared to buy Third World names, even when the coupon offered is more than 100 basis points higher.

In the Swiss Franc sector, as in the D-Mark one, yields continued to decline and the volume of new issues, while less spectacular than across the border to the North, continued at a very steady and healthy level. Japanese companies and a variety of Western borrowers, be they industrial names or state addresses continue to

account for most of the new bond issues in Swiss Francs. The tail end of last month witnessed a rare occurrence: a domestic sterling bond issue for a non-sterling area foreign borrower. Denmark became the first borrower to arrange such an issue in 18 years. This \$75m 25-year issue carrying a coupon of 13 per cent is structured like a partly paid gilt edged security and differs from a Eurosterling issue in a number of ways. The commissions paid by the borrower to the bank leading the issue are much lower, the maturity much longer, the bonds registered rather than in bearer form and both the management and underwriting group essentially composed of British banks. Furthermore, most of the issue was placed by a London broker.

July also witnessed another rare type of security: a sterling denominated bond convertible on to U.S. shares for Kollmorgen Corporation, and the second convertible Eurosterling issue for a Japanese company, Orient Finance. These various forms of sterling issues underline the increasingly international flavour of the London capital market.

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The table of quotations and yields gives the latest rates available on 31st July, 1980. This information is from reports from official and other sources which the Association of International Bond Dealers considers to be reliable, but adequate means of checking its accuracy are not available and the Association does not guarantee that the information it contains is accurate or complete. All rates quoted are for indication purposes only and are not based on, or are they intended to be used as a basis for, particular transactions. In quoting the rates the Association does not undertake that its members will take in all the listed Eurobonds and the Association, its members and the Financial Times Limited do not accept any responsibility for errors in the table.

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Creditanstalt-Market Makers in Austrian Schilling Bonds and International Bonds of Austrian Issuers.

Selected Austrian Schilling Bonds*	Middle Market price (22.7.80)	Yield to average life	Current Yield	Redemption (MD: Mandatory, Drawings by lot; PF: Purchase Fund; SF: Sinking Fund)
Maturity up to 5 years				
8 % Österreich 1973/III/B/82	100.75	9.23	7.94	20.11.74-82 at 102.0 to 102.5 MD
8 1/4 % Österreich 1975/S/83	99.50	9.42	8.54	5. 3.76-83 at 100.0 to 101.0 MD
8 1/4 % Innsbruck 1974/B/82	99.25	9.48	8.56	19.11.75-82 at 100.5 MD
8 1/4 % Wien 1974/B/84	98.00	9.47	8.67	2. 7.75-84 MD
Maturity over 5 years				
8 1/4 % Österreich 1976/S/86	99.75	9.43	8.52	20. 2.81-86 at 101.5 to 104.0 MD
8 % Österreich 1978/B/87	94.00	9.68	8.51	7. 3.83-87 MD
7 1/4 % Österreich 1978/IV/C/86	92.00	9.58	8.42	1. 9.86 MD
9 % Österreich 1980-92/8	98.00	9.32	9.18	24. 6.89-92 MD
8 % Airlberg Straßentunnel 1977/B/85	96.00	9.64	8.33	29. 7.80-85 MD
9 1/4 % Tauernautobahn 1980-88/1	100.50	9.39	9.45	20. 5.88 MD
8 1/4 % Energie 1975/II/B/85	100.25	9.60	8.48	29.10.79-85 at 103.5 MD
8 1/4 % Steyr-Daimler-Puch 1976/B/86	99.75	9.67	8.52	9. 3.81-86 at 103.0 to 104.0 MD
8 % VÖEST-Alpine 1977/B/86	94.25	9.71	8.49	15.11.82-86 MD
8 1/4 % CA-BV 1975/II/B/85	99.50	9.22	8.54	11.11.76-85 at 101.0 to 101.5 MD
8 % World Bank 1980-90	93.50	9.04	8.56	1. 2.90 PF

* Interest is payable without deduction for or on account of Austrian taxes.

Selected International Bonds of Austrian Issuers

US\$					
5 1/4 % Alpine Montan 1965/85	90.00	8.20	6.39	15. 6.72-85	SF
6 1/4 % Austrian Electricity 1966/86	98.50	7.11	6.73	1. 7.70-86	SF
6 1/4 % Austrian Electricity 1967/82	98.50	8.05	6.85	1.10.71-82	SF
6 % Republic of Austria 1964/84	94.50	8.94	6.35	31. 1.71-84	SF
6 1/4 % Republic of Austria 1967/82	94.75	11.42	7.12	15. 3.72-82	SF
8 1/4 % Republic of Austria 1976/90	88.50	10.76	9.89	15. 8.78-90	SF
8 1/4 % Tauernautobahn 1977/87	88.75	11.05	9.30	15. 3.83-87	SF
DM					
5 1/4 % Österreich 1978/90	86.75	7.98	6.63	1.11.85-90	
6 1/4 % VÖEST 1977/89	92.75	8.18	7.28	1. 6.84-89	
7 % Tauernkraftwerke 1968/83	99.50	7.34	7.04	1. 2.74-83	

For current prices and further information please contact:

For Austrian Schilling Bonds: Robert Jekl, Robert Wasinger (Telephone: 6622/1701, 1707, Telex: 74261-63)
For International Bonds: Walter Vogl (Telephone: 6622/2222, Telex: 136948)

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Leading Marketmakers in Eurobonds

WestLB Euro-Deutschmarkbond Yield Index

July 31, 1980: 8.26%		June 30, 1980: 8.43%				
7%	Ranite 78/87 (G)	81.40	7.66	8.71	5.83	1.687
7%	Rioch Comp. 78/83	82.50	5.89	8.17	3.00	1.863
7%	Roy B. Co. 80/80	88.50	7.76	8.77	8.13	1.785
7%	Roy Lease 78/84 PF	87.50	6.92	7.48	4.17	1.1084
7%	SAAB 71/98	88.65	7.78	7.98	5.83	1.677-885
7%	Sage Petroleum 77/87 PF	98.50	8.26	8.26	8.13	1.745-873
7%	Sandvik 72/87	98.35	7.83	7.98	5.26	1.294-870
7%	Sandvik 75/83	101.75	9.09	8.40	2.80	1.283
7%	Sanko 78/83	98.50	7.84	8.08	3.50	1.294
7%	Shell Int. 72/87	98.50	8.00	8.08	8.00	1.678-875
7%	Shell Int'l 77/88	97.50	8.82	7.24	8.43	1.285-890
7%	Siemens Europe 86/81	88.00	7.00	7.31	1.25	1.170-819
7%	Singapore 77/83	96.25	7.89	7.89	7.89	1.625
7%	Singapore 77/83	96.50	8.74	7.95	2.75	1.583
7%	Sira Kyiva 70/88 (G)	100.75	6.44	5.85	2.78	1.678-850
7%	S.N.C.F. 78/83	87.60	5.67	8.00	8.00	1.678-835
7%	Soc. Dev. Reg. 78/88 (G)	88.25	7.83	8.08	8.40	1.460-880
7%	Soc. Dev. Reg. 77/82 PF (G)	88.25	7.08	8.40	7.54	16.123-820
7%	Soc. Msr. Fin. 78/83 PF	100.00	8.00	8.95	1.72	1.679-830
7%	South-Africa 86/84	95.00	8.00	8.00	8.00	1.679-830
7%	South-Africa 88/84	95.00	8.76	7.02	3.67	1.473-845
7%	South-Africa 70/85	100.10	8.49	8.83	2.83	1.176-865
7%	South-Africa 78/83	98.25	7.89	7.89	7.89	1.177-865
7%	South-Africa 72/87	99.00	7.07	7.17	2.25	1.178-873
7%	South-Africa 80/87	99.25	9.07	8.74	6.80	1.787
7%	South-Afr. Broads. 78/81 PF (G)	98.00	8.16	11.54	5.93	1.581
7%	South-Afr. Oil Fund 78/81 I PF (O)	98.00	7.69	10.78	1.25	1.131
7%	South-Afr. Oil Fund 78/81 II PF (G)	97.50	7.44	8.34	1.29	16.119
7%	South-Afr. Oil Fund 78/82 I PF (G)	97.00	8.09	8.47	2.00	1.832
7%	South-Afr. Oil Fund 78/82 II PF (G)	96.50	8.18	8.00	2.00	16.119
7%	South-Afr. Oil Fund 78/83 PF (G)	95.50	8.38	8.65	3.25	1.1182
7%	South-Afr. Oil Fund 78/84 PF (G)	95.50	8.12	9.25	3.98	1.294
7%	South-Afr. Railway 78/81 PF (G)	96.25	7.95	8.00	3.42	1.679-885
7%	South-Afr. Railway 78/82 PF (G)	96.25	8.08	8.89	4.02	1.679-885
7%	South-Afr. Railway 78/83 PF (G)	96.00	8.07	10.32	1.76	1.582
7%	South-Afr. Railway 78/84 PF (G)	96.00	8.33	8.33	2.92	1.783
7%	South-Afr. Railway 78/85 II PF (G)	95.00	8.42	8.39	3.00	1.883
7%	South-Afr. Railway 78/83 PF (G)	94.30	8.30	8.73	3.33	1.123
7%	South Scnd. Bt. 73/88 (O)	98.10	7.28	7.69	5.50	1.678-895
7%	Spain 77/84	84.75	7.12	8.35	4.00	1.884
7%	Spain 78/88	96.80	8.83	8.41	7.75	1.584
7%	Starbank 80/80 PF	91.25	5.38	8.21	4.87	16.581-900
7%	Standard Imp. & Exp. 78/82 PF	98.00	7.91	8.80	7.80	1.678-885
7%	Stand. Char. Bank 78/83	91.30	6.98	7.75	7.42	1.188
7%	Stanol 78/88 (G)	91.00	6.69	7.62	6.08	1.834-888
7%	Swedish 78/83	97.00	7.07	7.80	8.58	1.936-888
7%	Swedish 78/83	97.00	7.92	7.93	7.93	1.936-888
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7%	Swedish 78/83	97.00	7.92	7.93	7.93	1.936-888
7%	Swedish 78/83	97.00	7.92	7.93	7.93	1.936-888

Economic indicators disappoint and both equities and Gilts make a dull start to the new account

Account Dealing Dates
Options
First Declara- Last Account
Dealings Unions Dealings Day
July 28 Aug. 7 Aug. 8 Aug. 18
Aug. 11 Aug. 28 Aug. 29 Sept. 8
Sept. 1 Sept. 11 Sept. 12 Sept. 22

*New time "dealings may take place from 9 am to 2 pm business days."

The three-hour holiday trading account for the stock markets got off to a slow and uncertain start yesterday. Despite Chancellor Sir Geoffrey Howe's backing for the Government's prediction of a "very substantial drop" in the inflation rate, no follow-through support developed in the gilt-edged sector after the two-day rally at the end of last week.

Potential buyers of gilts were keen to await July's Wholesale Price Indices and Central Government Borrowing Requirement. Both caused disappointment when they were announced in the late afternoon, and earlier in the day, the gilt market was quiet.

Quotations ended at the day's lowest with falls generally ranging to 1, but the £20-paid Treasury 11, per cent 1991 "A" fell a point to 17, as did Treasury 13 per cent 2000, to 73, for the 275-paid stock. Short-dated issues encountered some early cheap buying, but once this was completed prices drifted off in sympathy with the medium and long.

The equity sectors traded quietly and moved within narrow limits. A downward bias in leading issues was evident in the FT 30-share index which ended 2.1 off at 497.1 after having been 2.4 down at the day's lowest at 1 pm.

Leading Electricals remained popular, but gave up early gains before improving again towards the close, while the recently out-of-favour second line oil exploration issues made a firmer showing.

Weekend Press mention had only a marginal effect on prices, and the day's company trading statements, including the even Transport Development Group's good first-half profits having no impression on the shares at 7.30.

South African Gold Mines came back with yesterday's fall of 516 to 5617.1 in the bullion price, with the Gold Mines index rising 16.9 to 47.4.

General Wall's remarks about the possibility of civil war in Zimbabwe led to further falls in Southern Rhodesian bonds after last week's sharp losses on disappointment with the settlement terms.

Interest in Traded options was again largely confined to Lankro which contributed 154 deals to a total of 553. Last week's daily average was 613.

Royal Bk Scotland up

Royal Bank of Scotland became an isolated firm feature in an otherwise drab banking sector, rising 5 to 86p in response to a weekend Press suggestion that Citibank of the U.S. might bid for Royal's subsidiary Williams and Glyn's Bank. Elsewhere, UDT improved a couple of pence to 68p ahead of tomorrow's preliminary figures.

Forecasts of a substantial increase in beer prices in the coming year failed to find reflection in Breweries which held pre-weekend levels in a quiet business. Wines and Spirits lacked inspiration although Press suggestions that recent selling had been overdone helped Highland Distilleries, 5 better at 119p.

Nervous selling ahead of the interim results due towards the end of the month left London Brick 4 cheaper at 72p. Other leading buildings also trended downwards. Bine Circle and Ready Mixed Concrete losing a couple of pence apiece to 358p and 184p respectively. Elsewhere, Armature Shanks added 3 to 102p on hopes of a favourable outcome to the Monopolies Commission inquiry into Blue Circle's bid for the company. Recently cut following the interim results, Carron rallied 4 to 30p, but Western Brothers, a particularly thin market, shed 6 to a 1980 low of 75p. Marchwell revived with a gain of 6 at 100p, while Coshen hardened a penny to 34p, the latter in response to higher half-yearly profits.

Wearwell good again
Demand for leading Stores remained at a low ebb although a better undertone often left prices a penny or two better on the day. House of Fraser were particularly firm, rising 8 to 146p on fresh hopes of a bid for the company. Some isolated firm spots appeared in secondary issues. Press comment helped Goodman Brothers and Stockman, 2 up at 11p, MFT, a similar amount better at 50p, and Wearwell, 3 higher for a two-day gain of 6 at 81p, 3 and Q.

Interest in Traded options was again largely confined to Lankro which contributed 154 deals to a total of 553. Last week's daily average was 613.

was seen after the official close and the leaders ended at the day's best. GEC, helped by the chairman's annual review added a couple of pence to 484p, while good support was noted for Plessey, 5 up at 259p. Press comment lifted Thorn EMI 10 to 385p, and interest was also shown for Unilever, 320p, and Derwent, 30p, up 4 and 3 respectively, while renewed speculative demand buoyed Forward Technology, 9 dearer at 118p. Mairhead became a good market on revived hopes of a bid from Tyco Laboratories and ended 8 to the good at 140p, while further consideration of last week's annual results and capital proposals lifted Whole-

Boots firm
Trade was extremely thin in the miscellaneous industrial leaders on the first day of the

Speculative support was forthcoming for Smith (Whitworth) which rose 2 to 5p. Among Foods, British Sugar met renewed support and rose 8 to a 1980 peak of 260p. Interest in Hotels and Caterers was confined to selected secondary issues. Reo Stakis improved 1 1/2 to 44 1/2p after favourable weekend Press comment on the company's £4.4m provincial casino deal with Labrore. Fresh buying in a thin market left Wheeler's Restaurants 10 better at 245p.

added 3 to 155p, while late support was seen for Lax Service, 6 up at 89p. Components were again mixed; Dawty picked up 4 to 233p, but Automotive Products, interim statement due on Thursday, eased 2 to 85p. Kwik-Fit continued to benefit from acquisition of the Firestone retail outlets and firmed 2 1/2 more to 381p.

Business in Properties was on a reasonable scale, but price movements rarely exceeded a couple of pence in either direction. Among the leaders, Land Securities eased 2 to 361p, while WEPAC hardened a penny to 226p. Elsewhere, Property Security and Investment improved 2 to 217p on the increased annual revenue and proposed one-for-four scrip issue, while Avenue Close added 3 to 133p awaiting the preliminary results. Marier came in for support and gained 4 to 44p, but profit-taking clipped 2 from Regional A. 136p. Swire Properties put on 5 1/2 to 74 1/2p on far-eastern advances.

Oils firm
With the notable exception of British Petroleum, which eased 2 to 356p following the successful bid for Selection Trust, Oil made fresh headway of reports that the OPEC countries were near an agreement on a price structure. Shell put on 8 to 418p, while Lamsco gained 26 more to 720p and Tricentral 10 to 344p. Ultramar, interim results on Thursday, firmed 8 to 354p, while Sovereign added 9 to 254p, the latter following publicity given to a broker's bullish circular. I C G picked up 12 to 778p, while KCA and Premier improved 4 apiece to the common price of 84p. Carless firmed 5 to 163p, but Candecia closed 2 cheaper on balance at 196p, after 20p. Elsewhere, Strata rose 8 to 128p, but profit-taking left Double-Eagle 10 off at 195p and Warrior Resources 20 lower at 190p.

In Investment Trusts, consideration of North Sea oil interests helped Atlantic Assets, 188p, and Viking Resources, 258p, up 3 apiece. Financials were again featured by Mercantile House, 7 better at 283p, but Centreway Trust, firm last week following the annual results, eased 5 to 150p on profit-taking.

In mixed Textiles, Nottingham Manufacturing announced first-half earnings below market estimates and fell 7 to 89p. Orah, interim statement due on Friday, eased a penny to 26p, but Carrington Viyella firmed a fraction to 11p; the last-men-

Account and the closing trend was mixed. Boots stood out with a rise of 5 to 223p, while Unilever closed unchanged at 470p awaiting today's interim figures. Elsewhere, Faber International, at 282p, recorded a Press-inspired gain of 4. Still on hopes that the company will be awarded the lion's share of the Government's Inland Revenue computer contract, ICL edged forward a couple of pence more to 172p. Manchester Ship Canal closed a penny harder at 198p following the half-yearly figures. Down 25 last week following the poor first-half results, Hever A picked up 7 to 150p. Johnson Matthey closed 8 dearer at 206p on the one-for-one scrip-issue.

Medminster stood out in the Leisure sector, rising 4 1/2 to 35p in response to favourable weekend Press comment. Motor Distributors trended better where changed. Catlins

Deal- Deal- Declara- Settle-
Aug. 4 Aug. 15 Nov. 17
Aug. 18 Aug. 28 Nov. 20 Dec. 15
Sept. 8 Sept. 19 Dec. 4 Dec. 15

For rate indications see end of Share Information Service

Stocks favoured for the call included John Brown, Tebbitt Brothers, Premier Oil, Charter-

ball, Burmah, FNFC, Endeavour, Weeks Associates, LAC, R. P. Martin, Marks and Spencer, Armitage, Shanks, House of Fraser, Dunlop, Aran Energy, Tricentral, Town and City Properties and BLMC 71 per cent loan. Puts were arranged in Trusthouse Forte, Hongkong and Shanghai Banking and FNFC. No doubles were reported.

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